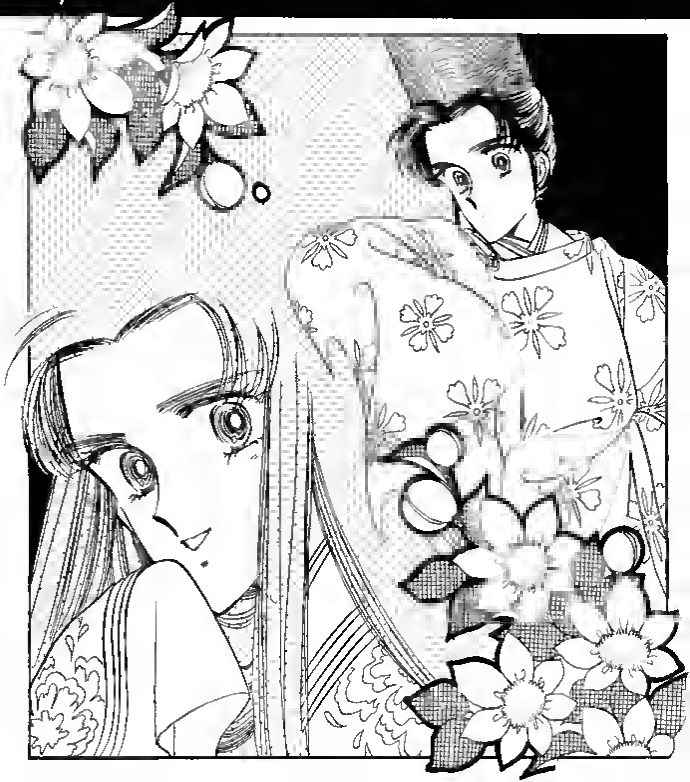
This manga is to be read
from Right to Left

花とゆめCOMICS

The Changelings (The Change!)

Chapter 1

Illust : Yamauchi Naomi
Story : Himura Saeko



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CREDITS
Manga The Changelings
Author · YAMAUCHI Naomi

Scan Provider Michex from Michex Raw Manga
Translated by Nathanchong
Proof-read by burumun
Edited by White Moon
Quality checked by Daffyd ap Morgen

THE CHANGELINGS.
THE HEIAN PERIOD WAS AN ERA OF BLOSSOMING FLOWERS.
HERE, AT THE SANJOU MANSION,
THE GONDAI-NAGON* RANK LORD FUJIWARA NO AKIMICHI
WAS ENJOYING A MOMENT OF (SHORT-LIVED) PEACE AND QUIET.
Hahhh
Flip
SO PEACE-FUL~~
SO VERY PEACEFUL ~~
Flip Flop
HOW LONG HAS IT BEEN SINCE BOTH OF MY NOISY WIVES DECIDED TO BE OUT AT THE SAME TIME?
HOW I CAN FULLY RELAX AT MY LEI-SURE.
Sigh
*Gondainagon = Junior Counselor of the State.

*Torikaebaya Monogatari = The Change-ings' a classical 12th century Japanese novel

THUMP THUMP THUMP
MY LORD! SOMETHING BAD HAS HAPPENED!
DARN, OUR MAID OMI IS STARTING "SOMETHING BAD HAS HAPPENED" YET AGAIN
I WAS JUST BEGINNING TO ENJOY THE FACT THAT THOSE TWO DEMONS WERE OUT
I'M RIGHT HERE.
AHH... MY LORD, BIG TROUBLE, SIR!
KIRA-SAN, THE YOUNG MASTER KIRA...
WHAT DID YOU SAYYYYY !?
WH...
CHALLENGED THE SON OF LORD DANCHOIN NO MIYA*, SIR!

*no miya = an honorific for a territorial prince or princess.

THE WEST MANSION
DARN, MISSED BY A HAIR.
WOW!
YOU'VE IMPROVED SO MUCH BUT KIRA-SAMA,
YOU THINK SO?
BANG BANG
THUMP THUMP THUMP
KI..
KI...
KI....
AH, KIRA ...!!
FATHER

DON'T WORRY I'M CONFIDENT OF MY SKILL IN ARCHERY
WE'LL SPLIT INTO WEST AND EAST GROUPS TO SHOOT ARROWS AGAINST EACH OTHER WITH A LIMITED AMOUNT OF ROUNDS.
YES, THE DAY AFTER TOMORROW.
WELL, DON'T BE!
TO A DUEL!?
REALLY CHALLENGE THE SON OF LORD DANCHOIN NO MIYA
D... DID YOU
THAT PERVERT NIYAKE WAS HITTING ON SAYURI!
BUT FATHER--
SOB SOB SOB
YOU EVEN CHALLENGED SOMEONE THIS TIME. WHAT A TROUBLE-MAKER YOU ARE.
WHY DO YOU ALWAYS WORRY YOUR PARENTS?!
NO "BUTS"!
NO WAY!
HOW COULD I ALLOW A PIMPLE-FACED IDIOT TO MAKE ADVANCES TOWARDS HER!
THE COMPETITION IS OUT OF THE QUESTION!
BUT...
THEREFORE THAT MAKES HER THE SAME AS MY SISTER!
SAYURI WAS RAISED BY THE SAME WET NURSE AS I WAS,
NO MATTER WHAT THE SITUATION IS, YOU'RE STILL A GIRL!!

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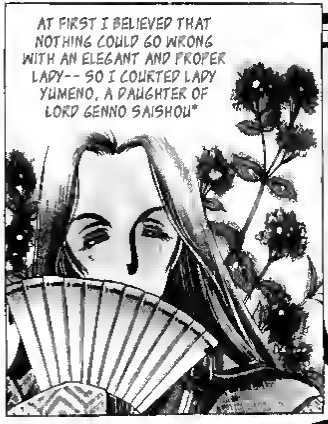
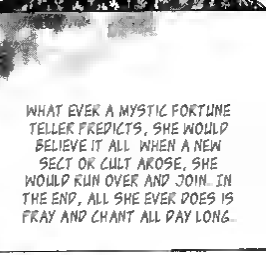
BELLOW
THIS DAUGHTER OF MINE, WHEN SHE WAS A BABY, HER CRYIES WERE LOUDER THAN NORMAL
ON THE CONTRARY, SHE FAVORS ARCHERY AND HORSEBACK RIDING
EVEN THOUGH SHE'S A GIRL, SHE CARES NOT ABOUT KOTO* OR KAIAWASE** NOR DOES SHE SHOW AN INTEREST IN ANY GIRLY TOYS
☆東宮 次に帝になれるヒト ☆当今 帝(みかど)のコト
AND MOTHER SAID IT'S GOOD TO BE STRONG AND ENERGETIC.
WHATEVER, FATHER NOWADAYS, A FEMALE CAN BE-COME A CROWN PRINCESS,
YOUR CASE IS COM-PLETELY DIFFE-RENT!!
THE EMPEROR DOES NOT HAVE A SON! THAT'S WHY HE APPOINTED HIS YOUNGER SISTER TO BE HIS CROWN PRINCESS!!
IN ADDITION, SHE EXCELS IN THE FLUTE, CHINESE POETRY, AND MASTERS THE ARTS BETTER THAN MOST BOYS
THEN SHE ENDS UP DRESSING LIKE ONE
SADLY, IT SUITS HER INCREDIBLY WELL.
I AM BOTH TROUBLED AND SHOCKED
HUFF HUFF HUFF HUFF HUFF

*Koto = Japanese plucked-string instrument. Playing koto was a required talent for aristocratic ladies

**Kaiawase = Shell-matching game popular with court aristocrats during the Heian Period

AS FOR THE DUEL--THE SON OF LORD DANCHOIN NO MIYA
HAS A BAD REPUTATION. I'M AFRAID HE MIGHT COME UP WITH A DIRTY TRICK
IT'S VERY DANGEROUS--DO YOU UNDERSTAND?
I THINK THEY'RE THE ONES WHO SHOULD BE CAUTIOUS, SIR
WHAT!?
WHAT?
pike pike!
THE RUMOR HAS IT
HE'S SO TERRIFIED OF KIRA-SAN HE'S ON THE VERGE OF RESORTING TO MONKHOOD
BESIDES, MY CHILDHOOD FRIEND--
WHO WAS A WET NURSE OF LORD DANCHOIN NO MIYA'S SON--HAS BEGGED US TO CANCEL THE DUEL
Because for better or worse his side is of the royal bloodline.
W... WHATEVER,
PLEASE, JUST CALL OFF THE CHALLENGE
PLEASE?
Hieeey...


AT FIRST I BELIEVED THAT NOTHING COULD GO WRONG WITH AN ELEGANT AND PROPER LADY-- SO I COURTED LADY YUMENO, A DAUGHTER OF LORD GENNO SAISHOU*


WHATEVER A MYSTIC FORTUNE TELLER PREDICTS, SHE WOULD BELIEVE IT ALL WHEN A NEW SECT OR CULT AROSE, SHE WOULD RUN OVER AND JOIN. IN THE END, ALL SHE EVER DOES IS PRAY AND CHANT ALL DAY LONG.

*Saishou = A court rank similar to prime minister or the highest advisor to the Emperor

**Chuunagon = Middle counselor of the state or Double peers

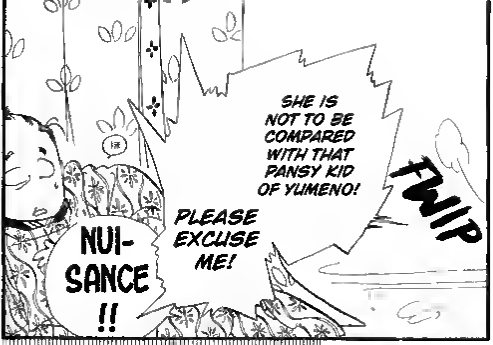
And the charcoal bucket was heavy.
ACTUALLY, THAT WAS VERY IMPRESSIVE
ONCE, SHE CAUGHT A BURGLAR SNEAKING IN AT NIGHT BY THROWING A BUCKET OF CHARCOAL AT HIM
I remember
THUMP
PLUNK
HER DIRECTNESS WAS AFFALLING IF A ROOM SCREEN WAS IN HER WAY, SHE WOULD JUST KICK IT DOWN
I don't need this ugly screen!
GRRGLE GRRGLE GRRGLE
WHEN SHE MOVED INTO THE SANJOU MANSION, A MUTUAL HOSTILITY FLARED UP ON FIRST SIGHT
I'VE NEVER HAD TIME FOR PEACE SINCE.
THE CHILD OF LADY YUMENO OF THE EAST MANSION...
ANOTHER LADY KIRA
OH YES,
.....
THERE IS ANOTHER PERSON WHO IS ALSO THE SOURCE OF MY CONSTANT DEPRESSION.
WERE PROBABLY DESTINED THE DAY THEY OPENED THEIR EYES TO THE WORLD
THE FATES OF BOTH CHILDREN

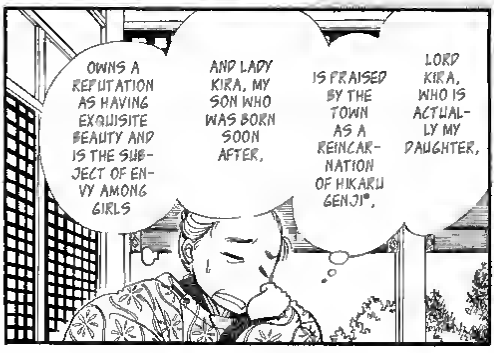
WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY THAT!?
IF ONLY BOTH OF MY CHILDREN SWAPPED PERSONALITIES
YIKES! MASAKO!?
WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY MY CHILD SWITCHING PERSONALITIES WITH THAT UNHEALTHY SCRAWNY CHILD?
I JUST GOT BACK!
I THOUGHT YOU WENT TO VISIT THE SICK WET NURSE?
Y-YOU!
I'M HER MOTHER, BUT SOMETIMES EVEN I CAN'T HELP BUT BE AMAZED BY HER.
SHE HAS A WONDERFUL VOICE ALONG WITH A GRACEFUL FACE AND FEATURES.
SHE SHINES ABOVE ALL THE BOYS IN ARCHERY OR ANY GENTLEMAN'S SPORT.
MY KIRA IS PERFECT THE WAY SHE IS!

平安喜女
へーあんことはじめまして

氷室さん原作
おかげさまのコミック
ス 2冊目である。
ありがたや
ありがたや♡

ところで 平安時代のことと調べてて初めて知った。
平安時代って
"古代"なのね！
いたしはず——っと中世に分類されると思っていたんだ。
でも 紫式部たちが"古代人"だなんて！
あ あんまりだと思いはせん？




OWNS A REPUTATION AS HAVING EXQUISITE BEAUTY AND IS THE SUBJECT OF ENVY AMONG GIRLS
AND LADY KIRA, MY SON WHO WAS BORN SOON AFTER,
IS PRAISED BY THE TOWN AS A REINCARNATION OF HIKARU GENJI*,
LORD KIRA, WHO IS ACTUALLY MY DAUGHTER,

*Hikaru Genji = A protagonist in the famous novel Genji Monogatari / Tales of Genji. He was described as the most handsome man in his era and attractive to all women.

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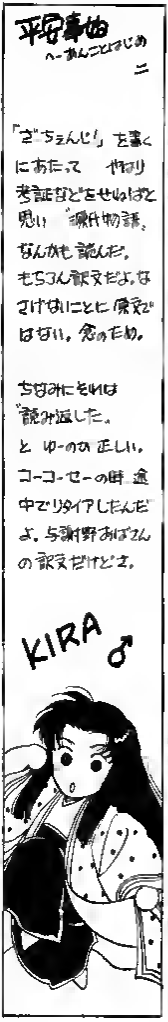
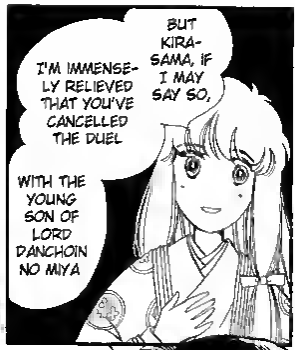
WHAT IS IT THIS TIME?
THE MALE LADY KIRA OF THE EAST MANSION HAS FAINTED AGAIN!
NOT AGAIN!
THUMP THUMP THUMP
SOMETHING BAD HAS HAPPENED!!
MY LORD, MY LORD,
WHAT CAUSED THESE TWO SIBLINGS TO HAVE REVERSED PERSONALITIES!?
THE MORE I THINK ABOUT IT, THE MORE I WANT TO CRY.
...
SOOB SOOB SOOB
WHAT A HEADACHE HE IS.
HE USUALLY FAINTS AT LEAST ONCE A DAY ANYWAY.
But my lord!
I DON'T CARE ANYMORE.
TODAY IS TOO TIRING
I DON'T WANT TO HEAR ANYTHING ANYMORE!

THERE SEEMS TO BE A CLAMOROUS COMMOTION AT THE MANSION, KIRA-SAMA.
YEAH. MOTHER RETURNED NOT TOO LONG AGO.
SHE WAS PROBABLY THROWING A TANTRUM AT FATHER AGAIN.
NO WONDER HIS HAIR IS GETTING THINNER EVERYDAY
Poor him
I DOUBT LADY MASAKO IS THE ONLY CAUSE
HOW-EVER, SAYURI, THE EAST MANSION IS NOISY TOO.
Ah, LADY KIRA
I MEAN... LORD KIRA WAS ANEMIC AND COLLAPSED AGAIN
AGAIN !?

KIRA-SAMA ALWAYS HAS THE ODDEST WAY OF THINKING
YOU'RE IMPOSSIBLE AS WELL, LITTLE MISS
GULP
And she's already H
MY YOUNGER BROTHER IS JUST IMPOSSIBLE
HAS HE EVER THOUGHT ABOUT CHALLENGING SOMEONE IN MARTIAL ART'S COMBAT ONCE IN HIS LIFE?
...
WHEN I WAS A CHILD, I TRULY BELIEVED THAT KIRA-SAMA WHO WAS ABOUT MY AGE, WAS ACTUALLY A BOY
WHEN I FOUND OUT THAT SHE WAS A GIRL, I COULDN'T LEAVE MY BED FOR 3 DAYS
SIGH
SHE EVEN THINKS AND ACTS LIKE A REAL MAN NOW...
?


平安庵始
へーあんこはじめ
ニ
「ざ・ちぇんじ」を書くにあたって やはり考証などをせねばと思い「源氏物語」なんかも読んだ。もちろん訳文だよ。なさけないことに原文ではない。念のため。
ちなみにそれは3読み返した。と ゆーのが正しい。コーコーセーの時 途中でリタイアしたんだよ。与謝野あばさんの訳文だけどさ。
KIRA ♂

BUT I'M DISAPPOINTED.
YEAH?


I'M IMMENSELY RELIEVED THAT YOU'VE CANCELLED THE DUEL
BUT KIRA-SAMA, IF I MAY SAY SO,
WITH THE YOUNG SON OF LORD DANCHOIN NO MIYA

THEY HARDLY KNOW HOW TO USE A BOW ANYMORE!!
MEN THESE DAYS ARE USELESS WIMPS. ALL THEY DO IS WRITE SONNETS TO GIRLS
KI. . KIRA-SAMA
A JAPANESE MAN OUGHT TO BE MORE MANLY AND STRONG
ESPECIALLY MY LITTLE BROTHER!

I WILL KILL MYSELF BY BITING MY TONGUE*!
HE WAS YELLING THAT IF HE HAD TO ACCOMPANY HIS MOTHER, LADY YUMENO, TO THE TEMPLE AT MT. NISHIYAMA...
B-BUT
LORD KIRA IS NOT COMPLETELY HELPLESS... FOR INSTANCE, A COUPLE DAYS AGO
SEE? THAT WAS WHAT HE SAID.
DON'T YOU SEE HOW BRAVELY HE STOOD UP FOR HIMSELF?
WO...W
AT THE MOMENT, ALL OF HIS PARLOR MAIDS FOLLOWED LADY YUMENO TO MT. NISHIYAMA.
WITH ONLY A FEW SCULLERY MAIDS LEFT, IT MUST BE DIFFICULT FOR HIM
LET'S PAY HIM A VISIT.
STANDS☆
EH?

* It was a popular suicide threat among Japanese/Chinese girls in the old days

EAST MANSION
She's so giddy.
.....
step
step
SINCE THE CHALLENGE IS OFF, I'M NOW BORED,
AND THE EAST MANSION IS EMPTY. GREAT TIMING.
YOU COME WITH ME.
ZZZ
ZZZ

HE'S SO PRETTY DON'T BLAME ME FOR PRAISING MY OWN BROTHER,
BUT LOOK AT HIM SAYURI.
his skin is so fair and flawless
him
HUH !!
slush
...
RUSH
SANUKI !?
W-WHO'S THERE !!?
...

HEY, IT'S JUST ME.
Not Sa-nuki
Sanuki?
SANUKI, LADY YUMENO'S FAVORITE MAID, FOLLOWED HER TO MT. NISHIYAMA, DIDN'T SHE?
Oh
IT'S JUST YOU, SIS...
SAG
I suddenly felt sick.
DID YOU PASS OUT AGAIN ?
HMM,
I HEARD THAT LADY MASAKO, YOUR MOTHER, CAME BACK. I THOUGHT THEY MEANT MY MOTHER...
WHAT A SKIT-TISH CHILD YOU ARE.
LADY YUMENO WENT TO THE CELEBRATION OF THE 40TH BIRTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE NEW PROPHET, DIDN'T SHE? SHE WOULDN'T BE BACK FOR TWO OR THREE DAYS.
hr
...
MY..
YOU'VE ALWAYS BEEN UNHEALTHY SINCE A BABY
BUT I THINK...
IT'S A FATED CURSE.

I'LL RAISE MY SON STRONG AND HEALTHY !!
NO, MY LORD !!
AFTER I WAS BORN, I DID NOT MAKE A NOISE NOR DID I CRY, AND WHEN THEY BREAST FED ME, I PUKED IT ALL OUT
I WAS BORN ONE DAY AFTER YOU, AND IT WAS A VERY DIFFICULT DELIVERY
THIS CHILD MAY NOT MAKE IT
LAST NIGHT A HOLY GOD OF MT. HORAI APPEARED IN MY DREAM.
IF I RAISE THIS CHILD AS A GIRL, HE WILL GROW UP WITHOUT ANY DIFFICULTIES!!
BUT ONE DAY
HE IS SO LUCKY TO BE A BOY
HIME* WOULD LOVE TO HAVE SHORT HAIRCUT AND RUN AROUND CARELESSLY LIKE THAT TOO
SO I ALWAYS THOUGHT I WAS A GIRL

*hime = literally means princess or young lady of noble birth. Sometimes a high-born young girl calls herself hime in sort of cute childish way.

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CRYYYYY
!
BUT...BUT MOTHER, IF HIME IS A BOY, HIME WANTS TO DRESS LIKE ONE.
HIME WANTS TO LOOK LIKE A BOY!!
BUT I'VE RAISED YOU AS A GIRL TO SAVE YOUR LIFE...
IF YOU GO BACK TO BEING A BOY, YOUR LIFE WILL BE TAKEN AWAY!
IF THAT'S THE CASE, I'LL COMMIT SUICIDE AND FOLLOW YOU TO THE AFTERWORLD!
MY LADY, WE WILL FOLLOW YOU TO PROVE OUR LOYALTY!
HIME-SAMA IS SUCH AN UNGRATEFUL CHILD!!
.....
EVERY TIME I BRING UP MY TRUE GENDER IN A CONVERSATION, MOTHER, SANJIKI, AND THE MAIDS WILL THREATEN ME WITH GROUP SUICIDE.
THEY OVER-POWER ME IN BOTH PHYSICAL STRENGTH AND WILL-POWER
I LOST TRACK OF HOW MANY TIMES I PASSED OUT.
HOW WONDER-FUL IT WOULD BE TO BE YOU, SISTER. YOUR LIFE IS SO CAREFREE.
THERE IS NO NEED TO RESTRICT YOURSELF INSIDE THE MANSION AND ACT LIKE A PROPER LADY.
YOU.

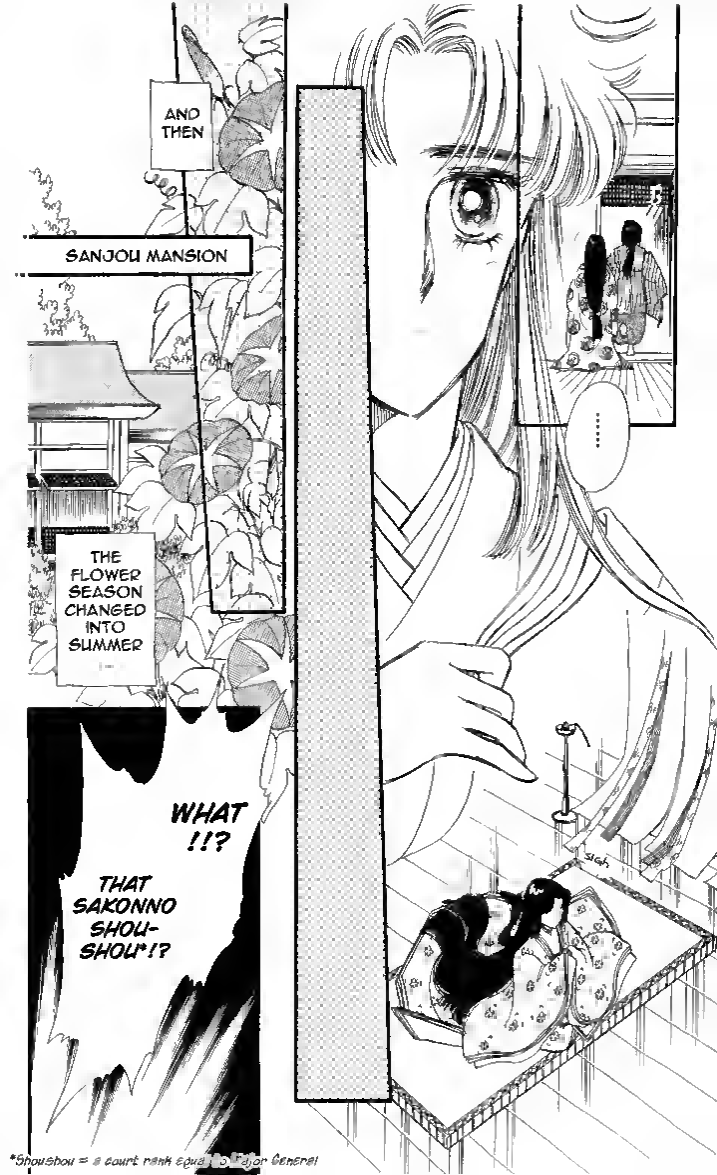
YOU REALLY WANT TO SWITCH BACK TO BEING A BOY?
I AM A BOY! I JUST WANT TO BE ABLE TO ACT LIKE ONE!!
IT'S ALL I'VE THOUGHT ABOUT SINCE I FIRST MET YOU.
AH... A YEAR AGO, WASN'T IT?
MY MOTHER AND LADY YUMENO OF THE EAST MANSION WERE ALWAYS AT ODDS WITH EACH OTHER.
I HEARD THAT I HAD A BROTHER ABOUT MY AGE, BUT I HAD NEVER MET HIM.
The little lord Kira of the East Mansion is a cross dresser and is also a weakling. Disturbing!
The little Lady Kira of the West house is such a tomboy
Surely she will never find a husband
WE BOTH ARE THE MIRROR IMAGE OF EACH OTHER BECAUSE WE RESEMBLE GRANDMOTHER WHO WAS A RAVING BEAUTY.
IS THAT RIGHT?
I WANT TO MEET HIM/HER
WOOSH
OOPS

OH NO!
THE BALL LANDED ON THE EAST MANSION.
RUSTLE
RUSTLE
I have no choice
Huh?
!!
.....
AFTER THAT YOU SCREAMED WAHH!,
AND LIKE THAT, YOU FAINTED.

*Genpuku ceremony was a historical Japanese coming-of-age ceremony To mark the entry to adult life of boys between the ages of 12 and 16 they were taken to the shrines of their patron kami There they were presented with their first adult clothes and their boys' hairstyles were changed to the adult style

IT MAKES ME THINK
IF ONLY I WAS RAISED AS A BOY LIKE YOU...
AFTER THAT EVENT, WE OFTEN SNUCK OUT TO SEE EACH OTHER TO CHAT AND COMPOSE POEM RESPONSES TO EACH OTHER.
BUT YOU ARE SO MUCH PRETTIER THAN I AM.
GOOSE-BUMPS
ALL MY FRIENDS CAME TO SEE ME
BECAUSE THEY HOPED TO GET A GLIMPSE OF 'LADY KIRA'
IT WOULD BE IMPOSSIBLE IF I DIDN'T PRETEND TO BE A BOY.
I'LL BE ACCOMPANYING SHIKIBU-NO-JOU** TO THE EAST MARKET.
fall over
I ALSO WANT ONE
IT IS ALSO UPSETTING THAT ALL OF MY FRIENDS ALREADY HAD THEIR GENPUKU CEREMONIES*
sigh
LET'S GO BACK, SAYU-RI
YEAH.
IT'S... IT'S TRUE THAT YOU DRESS AND ACT LIKE A BOY AT YOUR OWN WILL, BUT THIS IS...

**Shikibu-no-jou = An assistant in the ministry of court ceremonies



*Shoushou = a court rank equal to Major General

THAT'S CORRECT.
YE YES,
RIGHT, GUYS?
EVEN THOUGH IT WASN'T AN OFFICIAL MATCH, THE EMPEROR CAME TO WATCH FROM TIME TO TIME.
ORGANIZED A KEMARI** TOURNAMENT FOR THE EMPEROR'S ENTERTAINMENT.
LONG AFTER THE MONSOON SEASON PASSED, WE, THE YOUNG NOBLES,
HOWEVER, WE DID RECEIVE PRAISE FROM HIS MAJESTY.
HE WAS TRYING TO IMPRESS THE EMPEROR SO HE ALWAYS KICKED THE HIGH LO? THAT'S DIFFICULT TO RETURN.
STILL, IT WASN'T ENOUGH TO BEAT SAKONNO SHOUSHOU.
BECAUSE KIRA HAD TRAINED US SO HARD, WE WERE ABLE TO PUT UP AN IMPRESSIVE MATCH.
BUT SO DID SAKONNO SHOUSHOU...!

** Kemari is a form of football that was popular during the Heian Period

*Asuka means Asuka period (AD 538 to 710) Kemari was introduced to Japan during this time
**Dono = an honorific for aristocrats

HOWEVER, IF LORD KIRA WERE TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS TOURNAMENT, I THINK THE GAME WOULD HAVE BEEN VERY INTERESTING. DON'T YOU THINK SO, SAKONNO SHOU-SHOU-DONO**...!?
WHAT
YOUR MAJESTY, I BELIEVE OUR OPPONENTS PLAYED KEMARI IN "KIRA'S STYLE"
WHILE MY TEAM HONORED THE REGAL "ASUKA STYLE" WHICH HAS BEEN PASSED ON FOR GENERATIONS
AND THAT WAS WHEN SAKONNO STARTED TO TALK NONSENSE
OH MY, BEING COMPARED TO A BOY WHO HAS NOT YET HAD HIS GENPUKU CELEBRATION
THAT PROVES I STILL NEED MORE PRACTICE
THAT BASTARD ...!!
KIRA ...?
IF IT WASN'T IN FRONT OF THE EMPEROR, I WOULD'VE SHOWN HIM A FIST
HOW COULD HE SAY THAT!
IN FRONT OF THE EMPEROR!
Hear Hear

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MY FRIEND,
DID YOU KNOW SAKONNO SHOUSHOU BEFORE?
KIRA !?
OF COURSE I KNOW HIM, I KNOW HIM WELL
IT'S THAT SAKONNO SHOUSHOU AGAIN!!
HOW COULD I FORGET!?
THREE MONTHS AGO AT THE EAST MARKET
AH!
THUMP

THUMP
OUCH!
WATCH OUT LITTLE BRAT.
...
GAHH
HEY! WAIT A MINUTE !!

IT WAS YOU WHO NEEDED TO WATCH WHERE YOU WERE GOING!
I DEMAND AN APOLOGY!!
WHAT DID YOU SAY?
OH NO, A LITTLE MASTER IS WANDERING AROUND BY HIMSELF WITHOUT AN ESCORT.
BE CAREFUL OR THOSE SLAVE DEALERS MIGHT GET YOU.
THAT'S RIGHT.
SUCH A SWEET FACE, THE PRICE WILL SURELY SOAR.
HA HA HA HA
KU KU KU
"
WAH!
YOU LITTLE BRAT! WHAT ARE YOU DOING !!?
AC!K!
LITTLE LORD!!
SHIKIBU-NO-JOU ...!

THEY SERVE UNDER THE SAME MINISTRY OF COURT CEREMONIES
HEY, YOU TWO ARE SUB-ORDINATES UNDER PRINCE SHIKIBU-NO-KYOU-NO-MIYA*, CORRECT?
YES, SIR.
WE ARE ATTENDANTS OF LORD SAKONNO SHOUSHOU,
A SON OF THE PRINCE
SAKONNO SHOUSHOU?
THE SON OF LORD GON-DAINAGON, A HIGH NOBLE OF THE POWERFUL FUJIWARA CLAN!!?
PLEASE ACCEPT OUR UTMOST APOLO-GIES, SIR
nervous laugh
PLEASE DON'T DO THAT SIR
WE WERE TERRIBLY WRONG, SIR.
PLEASE FORGIVE OUR BENIGHT-ED IMPER-TINENCE
ENTER
MAY BE I SHOULD REPORT YOUR IMPERTINENCE TO GONDAI-NAGON-SAMA?
THIS BOY IS LORD KIRA, THE SON OF THE NOBLE GONDAI-NAGON.
MY APOLO-GIES, MAS-TER KIRA
IT'S BECAUSE I LOST YOU IN THE MARKET THAT THIS UPSETTING EVENT HAPPENED.
I'M ALL RIGHT
WHAT-EVER

* Shikibu-no-kyou means the minister of court ceremonies. no-miya indicates that the minister is some kind of royalty.

BECAUSE OF YOU I WAS SCORNED AND RIDICULED LIKE THAT! FATHER, IT'S YOUR DUTY TO DO SOMETHING!
THAT SAKONNO SHOUSHOU JERK!!
UNRANKED BRAT ?
HE IS JUST A UNRANKED IMMATURE BRAT WHO HASN'T PASSED HIS GENPUKU CEREMONY.
OUR MASTER SHOUSHOU IS A FIFTH-RANK COURTIER.
SLAM
...
WHAT'S WITH THAT URGENCY?
DID YOU EAT SOMETHING BAD?
huff huff
THIS IS ALL BECAUSE YOU WON'T LET ME HAVE A GENPUKU CEREMONY!
I WAS DISRESPECTED BY THE LOW CLASS SERVANTS.
THEY CALLED ME "UNRANKED BRAT" AND A "PRE-GENPUKU IMMATURE KID".
.....?

ALTHOUGH MY OLD FRIENDS VISIT ONCE IN A WHILE,
ALL THEY TALK ABOUT IS WHAT HAPPENED IN THE PALACE
NOWADAYS THOSE WHO COME TO OUR HOUSE ARE EITHER YOUNGSTERS OR THOSE WHO WISH TO CATCH A GLIMPSE AND CAPTURE THE HEART OF LADY KIRA OF THE EAST MANSION!
AT MY AGE, ALL OF MY FRIENDS ALREADY HAD GENPUKU.
.....
HOW CAN YOU ACT LIKE A STONE? DON'T YOU FEEL ANYTHING FOR NOT ALLOWING ME TO HAVE A GENPUKU!?
AS A FATHER, HOW COULD YOU JUST STAND THERE AND WITNESS IT!?
YOUR OWN CHILD IS SUFFERING IN SUCH A PITEOUS SITUATION.
YOUR ACTING LIKE A MALE IN THIS HOUSE IS ONE THING, BUT FOR YOU TO DISGUISE YOURSELF AS A MAN BEFORE OF THE EMPEROR IS IMPOSSIBLE.
LISTEN TO TME...! TO HAVE A GENPUKU AND BECOME A COURTIER TO SERVE UNDER THE EMPEROR IS A SERIOUS MATTER!
FATHER!!
GENPUKU IS ABSOLUTELY OUT OF THE QUESTION

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IF THE SECRET OF YOUR TRUE GENDER IS OUT OF THE BAG,
It could've well shaken our peaceful country's life.
THE PUNISHMENT FOR DECEIVING THE EMPEROR IS...
DECAPITATION !!
YHRES
NOW THINK ABOUT THAT LONG AND HARD.
.....
I JUST WANT TO SERVE UNDER THE CROWN IN THE PALACE LIKE ALL OF MY FRIENDS.
I DIDN'T THINK IT WAS SUCH A BIG DEAL
THE PUNISHMENT FOR DECEIVING
UNRANKED BRAT
steam
GAH
IF ONLY I HAD A GENPUKU
If only
AN IMMATURE BRAT WHO HASN'T YET PASSED A GENPUKU
steam
steam

BUT I'D LIKE TO HAVE A GENPUKU NO MATTER WHAT!!
IF THAT'S YOUR DECISION,
I'M LEAVING THE CAPITAL!
I'M RUN-NING AWAY FROM HOME!
FUME
WELL THEN!
NOPE! END OF STORY.
SAGANO

I ONLY HAVE MY STUBBORNNESS TO BLAME.
SO HOT ~~!
SUMMER IN THE CAPITAL IS ALMOST UNBEARABLE,
BUT THE HEAT HERE IS EVEN WORSE
SAYURI, COULD YOU DO SOMETHING TO COOL ME OFF?
NO WAY.
Huh?
ALL OF A SUDDEN, LADY KIRA WISHED TO RUN AWAY TO THIS MOUNTAIN VILLA IN SAGANO WHERE NO MAINTENANCE HAS BEEN MADE FOR 2-3 YEARS.
AND YOU DIDN'T BRING ANY OF THE SERVANTS NOW IT'S JUST ME AND THE HOUSEKEEPER.

PST!
.....
Ignore
I'M ONLY A PRE-GENPUKU BRAT. I DON'T HAVE THE LUXURY OF BEING THAT EXTRAVAGANT.
HOW RIGHT YOU ARE, KIRA-SAMA.
WHINING FOR SOMETHING SO IMPOSSIBLE LIKE A GENPUKU CEREMONY IS REALLY AS EXPECTED OF
"A CRY-BABY".
SAYURI WILL ENDURE THIS SITUATION BECAUSE SHE IS AN ADULT!
ACTUALLY,
I'M ONLY SUPPOSED TO ATTEND AND TAKE PERSONAL CARE OF KIRA-SAMA
GLANCE
BUT NOW I HAVE TO DO HARD LABOR!! FROM HAULING WATER TO KITCHEN DUTY!!
HOW COULD YOU DO THIS TO ME!?
THAT'S PEASANT WORK!
THEN GO BACK!
DEAR HEAVENS, HOW COULD YOU SAY THAT!?
I JUST WANTED YOU TO SUMMON SOME SERVANTS ALONG

MISS SAYURI.
LORD KIRA JUST WENT OUTSIDE WITHOUT AN ESCORT, SHOULD I...
LET HIM BE.
ANY MOUNTAIN BANDIT UNFORTUNATE ENOUGH
TO STUMBLE UPON KIRA-SAMA SURELY IS AN UNLUCKY ONE
I've had enough of this
IS but..
SNAP
WHAT IS IT NOW!?
MISS SAYURI.
THERE ARE SOME NOBLES FROM THE CAPITAL HERE...
splash

AH ...
THIS IS SO NICE.
PADDLE
WHEN I WAS YOUNG, I USED TO SWIM HERE ALL THE TIME.
PADDLE PADDLE
NOT MANY PEOPLE COME BY HERE
I AM GOING TO THE MOUNTAIN VILLA IN SAGANO!!
I SHOULDN'T HAVE MENTIONED THAT TO FATHER
THAT'S WHY NO ONE SEEMED TO CARE
AND SAYURI IS NOT VERY SUP-PORTIVE
SHOULDN'T THE SERVANTS BE WORRIED AND FOLLOW ME HERE ON THEIR OWN!!?
SNIGH

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FLAP
FLAP
FLAP
FLAP
TUMBLE!!
tsu...
BURNING (SOMEONE) OUT OF FRUSTRATION
BECAUSE OF HIM I AM HERE PADDLING IN THE WATER AND NOT HAVING A GENPUKU
ALL OF THIS IS BECAUSE OF THAT JERK SAKONNO SHOUSHOU!
SWIM
SWIM
SWIM
I FORGOT THAT OTHER THAN SAYURI, NONE OF THE SERVANTS KNOW THAT I'M A GIRL
OH YES
Zoom Zoom Zoom
SWIMMING FRANTICALLY DOESN'T GET HER ANYWHERE
Ek!
NOT GOOD !!
WHAT IF SOMEONE OTHER THAN SAYURI HAS FOLLOWED ME ...

SHAKE
RUSTLE
SO COLD. I'M SHIVERING ALL OVER!
shiver shiver
F... FINALLY, I'VE REACHED THE RIVERBANK...
h-huff
RUSTLE RUSTLE
ガサガサ

EH!?
AH...

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I MEAN IT WAS JUST A VERY QUICK FLASH AND IT WAS BLURRY
OH! N-NO!
JUST A FLASH!! I MEAN ...
YOU SAW !?
I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO BELIEVE
WHEN I SAW YOU....
MY FATHER IS TRYING TO FORCE ME INTO A MARRIAGE AGAINST MY WILL...
EXTREMELY DISTRAUGHT, I WAS GOING TO WALK INTO THE DEEP TO LET THE STREAM CARRY ME DOWN AND DISAPPEAR, SIR
TH... THE TRUTH IS ..
YOU MUST HAVE A REASON, RIGHT?
I DO NOT BELIEVE YOU ARE A FEMALE BANDIT, SO ..
ahem
What is he thinking, I wonder?
WHAT ..? I DIDN'T HAVE ANY PARTICULAR REASON TO SWIM?
WAITING FOR EXPLANATION
I GUESS I NEED TO MAKE UP A STORY TO SATISFY HIM TO GO AWAY
HMM HMM

Y...YOU WERE COMMITTING SUICIDE!?
Snap
B... BUT DROWNING YOURSELF IS FOOLISH!!
KYAAAA
HOW MANY TIMES DO YOU WANT TO SEE ME NAKED!?
PERVERT!!
I'M SORRY!!
Grrr
IT'S TRUE BEING FORCED INTO AN ARRANGED MARRIAGE IS PAINFUL,
BUT YOU SHOULD THINK ABOUT HOW YOUR PARENTS WANT THE BEST FOR YOU!
WHY DON'T YOU TRY TO SPEAK WITH THEM ABOUT YOUR FEELINGS? MAYBE THEY WILL UNDERSTAND HOW EXCRUCIATING YOUR ANGUISH IS THAT YOU WERE WILLING TO THROW YOUR LIFE AWAY.
AH.. SIR.
DEATH IS SIMPLE, BUT TO LIVE IS COMPLICATED.
SO YOU MUST LIVE BRAVELY AND FACE YOUR TROUBLES
PERHAPS THIS IS THE GODS' WILL.
.....

ARE YOU STILL LISTENING?
Y.. YES.
MAYBE THE REASON THE CURRENT PUSHED ME BACK TO SHORE
WAS BECAUSE THE GODS WISHED ME TO BE ALIVE
AND FACE MY PROBLEMS IN THIS WORLD
Just as I thought
SAYURI !?
SAYYSS
STARTLED
M... MY SERVANT IS COMING TO FIND ME.
I'LLL TELL HER THAT I FELL INTO THE STREAM
PLEASE, SIR! JUST FORGET ABOUT ME AND LEAVE!!
BUT! ...
PLEASE ...
IF YOU PITY ME ...
I SEE ...
.....
I SYMPATHIZE FOR YOUR MISFORTUNE.
HUH?

I REAL-LY DO...
THERE-FORE,
CLICK
AS A MEMORIAL FOR WHAT HAPPENED TODAY...
A ROSARY
17
IF YOU SHOULD THINK OF ENDING YOUR LIFE AGAIN,
PLEASE THINK OF ME AND TRY TO ENDURE THE PAIN AND KEEP ON LIVING
I'M VERY GRATEFUL TO YOU, MY LORD
ERR...
I SHALL NEVER EVER FORGET ABOUT YOU.

RUSTLE...!!
Kyaa
KIRA-SAMA !!?
OH NO
WHY ARE YOU IN THIS STATE, KIRA-SAMA !!?
I WAS JUST BEING CLUMSY AND FELL INTO THE POND.
WHAT KIND OF PERSON TAKES OFF THEIR CLOTHES AND ACCIDENTALLY FALLS INTO THE POND!!?
Please!
Good thing it was Sayuri if it was anyone else, the secret would have been exposed
mumble mumble
OH YEAH !!
I TOLD HIM I TRIED TO DROWN MYSELF BUT WHO IN THEIR RIGHT MIND WOULD TAKE OFF THEIR CLOTHES FIRST?
THAT BONEHEAD DRESSED VERY ELEGANTLY HE MUST BE SOME KIND OF PROVINCIAL ARISTOCRAT SOMEWHERE.
THIS PURPLE CRYSTAL ROSARY MUST BE VERY EXPENSIVE, YET HE JUST GAVE IT TO ME LIKE THAT ...
Is it real?

WHAT ARE YOU LAUGHING ABOUT?
Giggle Giggle
DID HE REALLY BELIEVE ALL THE STUFF I MADE UP?
I'M SORRY, SAYURI.
I WAS JUST
THINKING ABOUT WHAT JUST HAPPENED...
BUT KIRA-SAMA THOUGHT ALL THESE WERE LAUGHING MATTERS
And even went skinny dipping.
SOME NOBLES FROM THE CAPITAL CAME BY AND ASKED IF WE'VE SEEN A STRANGER
THEY WERE ALL PANICKY AND IN SEARCH OF SOMEONE BE-CAUSE MOUNTAIN BANDITS ARE RUMORED TO BE AROUND HERE. THAT'S WHY I WAS SO CONCERNED ABOUT YOU AND CAME TO GET YOU BACK.
AND I CAN'T HELP BUT LAUGH OUT LOUD AT HIM

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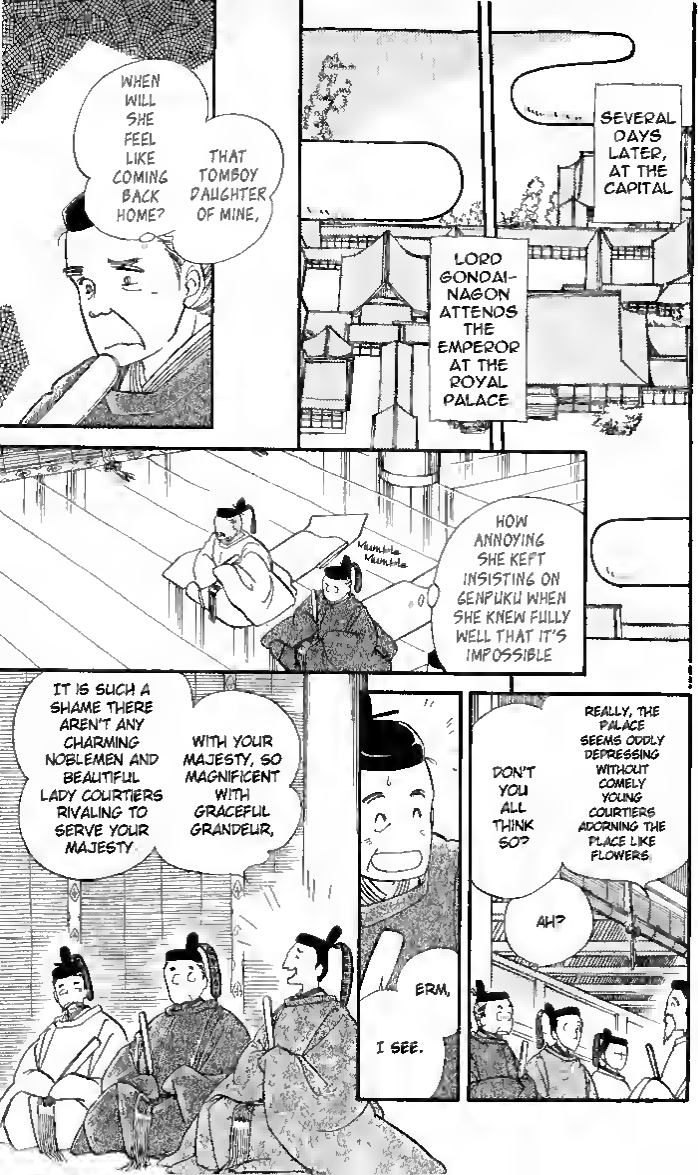
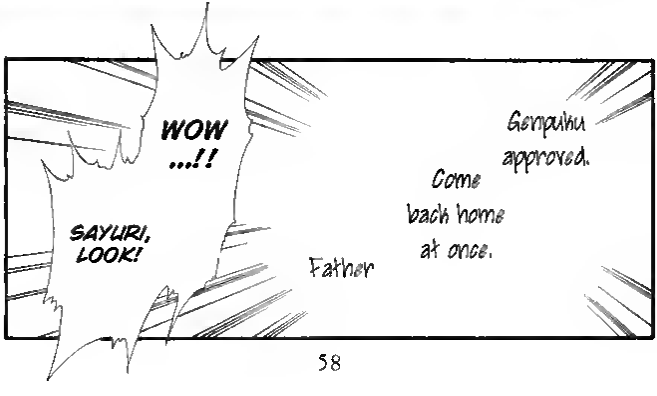

SEVERAL DAYS LATER, AT THE CAPITAL
LORD GONDAI-NAGON ATTENDS THE EMPEROR AT THE ROYAL PALACE
HOW ANNOYING SHE KEPT INSISTING ON GENPUKU WHEN SHE KNEW FULLY WELL THAT IT'S IMPOSSIBLE
Mumble Mumble
WHEN WILL SHE FEEL LIKE COMING BACK HOME?
THAT TOMBOY DAUGHTER OF MINE,
REALLY, THE PALACE SEEMS ODDLY DEPRESSING WITHOUT COMELY YOUNG COURTIERS ADORNING THE PLACE LIKE FLOWERS.
DON'T YOU ALL THINK SO?
AH?
ERM, I SEE.
WITH YOUR MAJESTY, SO MAGNIFICENT WITH GRACEFUL GRANDEUR,
IT IS SUCH A SHAME THERE AREN'T ANY CHARMING NOBLEMEN AND BEAUTIFUL LADY COURTIERS RIVALING TO SERVE YOUR MAJESTY

NO WAY IN HELL!
O... OH RIGHT!
LORD KIRA HAS NOT YET HAD A GENPUKU CEREMONY, MY BROTHER?
AND THE LADY KIRA OF THE SAME AGE HAS NOT PASSED A MOGI* CEREMONY AS WELL.
HOW OLD ARE THEY?
YOUR CHILDREN ARE VERY POPULAR, IT SEEMS.
HUH
UHH
ERR
HOW TRUE.
DURING MY FATHER'S REIGN,
THERE WERE NOBLEMEN LIKE YOU ALL COMPETING YOUR SKILLS AGAINST EACH OTHER IN VARIOUS WAYS
UNTITLED
AND MY NATURE HAS INFLUENCED ALL OF YOU.
PERHAPS BECAUSE I AM AN IDLE BORE,
ONLY TWO YEARS HAS PASSED SINCE YOUR MAJESTY'S ACCESSION TO THE THRONE.
FROM NOW ON, THE YOUNG COURTIERS WILL CONTINUE TO SHINE WITH THEIR TALENTS FOLLOWING YOUR MAJESTY'S REMARKABLE EXAMPLE.
ALSO KNOWN AS "LORD PLEASE PLEASE"
PLEASE PLEASE, YOUR MAJESTY.
N...
NOT AT ALL YOUR MAJESTY!
THAT WAS NOT WHAT I MEANT AT ALL.

*Mogi ceremony = A coming of age ceremony for girls, equivalent to boys' Genpuku.

FOUR ...
TEEN ...
YOUR MAJESTY.
14 !?
THEN WHY HAVEN'T THEY YET HAD A GENPUKU AND MOGI?
IS THERE ANY PARTICULAR REASON?
N... NONE, SIRE
NO PARTICULAR REASON BEHIND IT AT ALL.
IT'S JUST THAT MY DAUGHTER IS TIMID AND EXTREMELY SHY
SOMETIMES SHE FAINTS AT THE SIGHT OF AN UNACQUAINTED NEW MAID.
AND KIRA STILL LOOKS AND ACTS LIKE A CHILD.
He will only cause more problems serve an official
I HEARD A RUMOR THAT YOUR SON WAS A GALLANT YOUNG MAN
LAST TIME DURING THE TEMARI GAME OF THE YOUNG ARISTOCRATS,
I DO WISH TO MEET SOMEONE OF SUCH REPUTED FAME SOON.
YOU ARE AN ODD PERSON
EVERYONE ELSE CAN'T WAIT TO HAVE THEIR CHILDREN SERVE IN THE PALACE TO GUARANTEE A BRIGHT FUTURE
...
HAVE YOUR SON APPOINTED.

APPOINTED!?
BUT
B
B
KIRA IS STILL RANK-LESS
EVEN THOUGH HE IS APPOINTED, HE IS YET TO BE TREATED AS AN ADULT,
YOUR MA-JESTY
IN THAT CASE, I SHALL IN-STANTLY APPOINT HIM TO BE A FIFTH RANK COURTIER
ARRANGE A GENPUKU AND HAVE HIM REPORT TO THE COURT AS SOON AS POSSIBLE
THUNK


WOW ...!!
SAYURI, LOOK!
Genpuku approved.
Come back home at once.
Father

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This manga is to be read
from Right to Left

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CREDITS
Manga The Changelings
Story by : HIMURO Saeko
Illustrated by : YAMAUCHI Naomi

Scan Provider : Michex from Michex Raw Manga
Translated by : Chihaya
Proof-read by : Daffyd ap Morgen
Edited by : White Moon, Dion, HikaFuUmi, ShiOuRi

NEVER THOUGHT FATHER WOULD ALLOW ME A GENPUKU THIS QUICK.
RIGHT? SAYURI?
HAHA
GENPUKU!? NONSENSE!
YOU'RE A GIRL, REMEMBER !!?
WHAT IF ALL THIS REACHES THE EMPEROR'S EARS!!?
HE WAS TOTALLY OPPOSED TO IT...
I'M NOT GOING TO SUBJECT MYSELF TO BEING A COURTIER, THOUGH.
BUT WHATEVER! MY RUNNING AWAY TO KITASAGA'S JUST PAID OFF HANDSOMELY.
Genpuku, come on! Genpuku!
.....
HOW STRANGE!

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!!!!
W... WHAT'S ALL THIS COMMOTION ABOUT ..?
S... SAYURI WILL FIND OUT IMME-DIATELY, SIRI!
MOVE! MOVE!
DON'T DAW-DLE!
FA-THER.
FATH-
What's all this smoke!? ...
COUGH COUGH COUGH
FA-THER !?
WHAT ON EARTH IS HAPPEN-ING?
WHAT'S ALL THIS ABOUT !?
WHAT DO YOU THINK IT IS . . .?
THE ACRID INCENSE FROM YUMENO OF THE EAST MANSION MAKES MY EYES WATER
HAZY HAZY
SNUFF
YOU KNOW ALL THIS MADNESS IS BECAUSE OF YOUR GENPUKU!!
MINE?

I TOLD YOU TO COME BACK FOR YOUR GENPUKU AT ONCE
BECAUSE HIS MAJESTY DEMANDED IT
EH?
BUT YOU GAVE ME YOUR PERMISSION YOURSELF.
I DIDN'T! IT WAS HIS MAJESTY.
...
HIS MAJESTY?
HOW THE HECK DID THIS HAPPEN—?
I'M BOTHERED ABOUT THIS MORE THAN YOU!
THE EMPEROR!?
HIS MAJESTY ... LIKE ...
Eh!?

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TWO DAYS AGO
I ATTENDED ON HIS MAJESTY TO PRESENT THE AUTUMN QUARTERLY REPORT AS WE MADE SMALL TALK ON THIS AND THAT
ONLY GOD KNOWS WHY - THE TOPIC SUDDENLY TURNED TO YOU, KIRA
ANI-UE-SAN*, YOUR SON -LORD KIRA- HASN'T YET HAD A GENPUKU.
14 YEARS OLD AND NO GEN-PUKU?
Shocked!!
I WISH TO MEET SOME-ONE OF SUCH RE-PUTED FAME SOON.
HAVE YOUR SON APPOIN-TED.
AND HE SPECIALLY APPOINTED YOU TO THE FIFTH-RANK SO YOU HAVE IMMEDIATE ACCESS TO THE INNER PALACE
I'VE NO CHOICE BUT ALLOW YOUR GENPUKU NO MATTER WHAT!!
WAH
dumbfounded
TO MAKE MATTERS WORSE THAT DRATTED BROTHER WHO IS THE CURRENT UDAIJIN**
ANI-UE-SAN, ABOUT THE HOST FOR LORD KIRA'S GENPUKU- ♡
YOU SEE ---
I'D REALLY APPRE-CIATE IT IF YOU ALLOW ME TO DO THE HONORS.

*Ani-ue = A refined and elegant honorific referring to an older or senior "big brother" figure.

**Udaijin = "Minister of the Right"

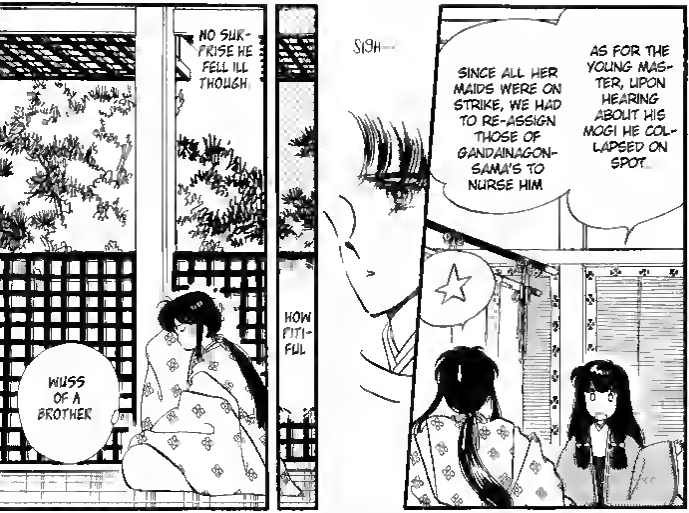
WE'RE TALKING ABOUT THE GRANDEST EVENT OF THE ERA!!
NOW WITH BOTH UDAIJIN AND SADAIJIN COMPETING TO BE THE HOST OF HONOR
A GENPUKU BY DIRECT ORDER OF HIS MAJESTY HIMSELF IS A PRESTIGE TO OUR FAMILY AND HAS PIQUED EVERYONE'S INTEREST
.....
YOU KNOW THE REASON HIS MAJESTY REQUESTED THE GENPUKU WAS BECAUSE I BROUGHT UP THE TOPIC OF LORD KIRA DURING THE ATTENDANCE,
BUST SON!!
Please? Please?
HE KEPT ON BESEECHING ME
EVEN YOUR GRANDFATHER -THE SADAIJIN*- WHOSE HEALTH IS AILING DUE TO HIS ADVANCED AGE
NO ONE BUT I CAN BE THE HOST OF MY GRANDSON'S GENPUKU....!!
TEETER TOTTER
FOUND THE STRENGTH TO GET UP TO ANNOUNCE THIS

*Sadaijin = "Minister of the Left", the emperor's highest counselor

THE GRANDEST EVENT OF THE ERA!?
HOW DID IT TURN OUT LIKE THIS?
I HAD NO IDEA MY GENPUKU WOULD BECOME...
THIS GIGANTIC!!
AND LADY YUMENO.
THE YOUNG LORD OF THE WEST MANOR IS HAVING A GENPUKU!! IT'S NOT FAIR!
YOU MUST ALLOW MY LADY KIRA HER MOGI TOO!!
I CAN HARDLY OPEN MY EYES ANY-MORE...
THAT'S WHY THE HOUSE IS FILLED WITH INCENSE
OR I WON'T STOP MY PRAYING RITUAL!!
DOC DOC DOC DOC
CHAT CHAT
SMOKE SMOKE
THERE! ARE YOU HAPPY NOW?
I HAVE NO CHOICE!
BECAUSE IT WAS HIS MAJESTY'S DIRECT ORDER

HAPPY IS HAPPY...
WELL...
WAHWAHWAH
YOU FINALLY GOT YOUR GENPUKU ---!!
...
THE PENALTY FOR DECEIVING THE EMPEROR IS EITHER EXILE TO REMOTE ISLAND OR DEATH!!
BUT WHAT IF THEY REALIZE I'M A WOMAN?
IS PROBABLY HAVING A FIT FOR THE THOUSANDTH TIME...
MY DEAR BROTHER
He is really good at doing that
AND LADY YUMENO DEMANDED KIKA OF THE WEST MANSION TO HAVE A MOGI
WHO WOULD HAVE THOUGHT THE EMPEROR WOULD PERSONALLY ORDER MY GENPUKU?
THIS IS TURNING MEGA-SERIOUS

LOOKS LIKE EVER SINCE YOUR GENPUKU WAS SET, EV-ERYONE'S BEEN MILLING ABOUT FRANTICALLY
FROM MY GRAPE-VINE NET-WORKS,
I NEVER WANTED TO DRAG HIM INTO THIS MESS
8
SHE SAID THAT
AND HAS BEEN CHANTING ABRACADABRA NON-STOP FOR TWO NIGHTS AND TWO DAYS.
Determined☆
LIKE LADY YUMENO OF THE EAST MANSION
I SHALL NOT STOP UNTIL MY LADY KIRA IS AL-LOWED HER MOGI!!
THEN JOINED FORCES CHANT-ING WITH HER LADY-SHIP
WE SHALL CEASE OUR DUTIES UNTIL MILADY'S REQUEST IS HONORED
LADY YUMENO'S MAIDS-IN-WAITING, LED BY SANUKI-SAN...
.....
☆STRIKE!!☆
THE CITY GUARDS MISTOOK IT AS A FIRE AND FLOCKED ABOUT IN PANIC.
LAST NIGHT THE INCENSE GOT A LITTLE OUT OF HAND, FILLING THE MANOR WITH THICK SMOKE


NO SURPRISE HE FELL ILL THOUGH.
HOW FITIFUL
WUSS OF A BROTHER
SIGH—
AS FOR THE YOUNG MASTER, UPON HEARING ABOUT HIS MOGI HE COLLAPSED ON SPOT.
SINCE ALL HER MAIDS WERE ON STRIKE, WE HAD TO RE-ASSIGN THOSE OF GANDAINAGON-SAMA'S TO NURSE HIM.

RIGHT
SAYURI
LET'S GO CHECK ON HIM.
HMM
THE EAST MANSION'S CHANTING WOULD DRIVE A SANE PERSON OUT OF HIS MIND
HE'S ALREADY MOVED OUT TO THE NORTHEAST WING, SIR.
OH—
AND WHERE IS HE NOW?
THE REASON HE'S BEDRIDDEN
WAS ALL BECAUSE OF ME

KYAAAA
MASAKO -SAMA ! MILADY FAINT-ED!
HELP !!
"MY" TOUGH MOTH-ER!?
LOOKS LIKE MILADY WAS TOO STRESSED-OUT PRE-PARING
KIRA-SAMA'S GENPUKU. SHE FAINT-ED YESTER-DAY AS WELL
From what I heard
...
The Northwest wing
KIRA-SAMA JUST CALMED DOWN
PLEASE DON'T MAKE HER RILED UP AGAIN
ヒソヒソ

ANE-SAMA..?
...
I DON'T WANT A MOGI
MO-THER ..... NO MOGI
mum ble mum ble
AH
SA-NUKI !?
MOGI...
ANY NEWS ABOUT THE MOGI!?
SFX RISE

I CAME TO SEE YOU HOW YOU'RE... COPING
SORRY
Flare
CONGRATULATIONS ON GETTING YOUR LONG-WISHED GENPUKU!
THE WEATHER MUST HAVE BEEN BEAUTIFUL AT KITASAGA
HOW NICE TO COME BACK AND FIND A GENPUKU READY FOR YOU.
FOR YOU...
ANE-SAMA'S WISH HAS BEEN ANSWERED.
BUT I'M A MAN, YOU KNOW!
IT WAS NEVER MY INTENTION TO CROSS-DRESS AS A GIRL!
AND WHY DO I HAVE TO HAVE A "MOGI" AND BECOME A FULL-GROWN LADY!?
P-PLEASE CHILL OUT
CHILL OUT !?

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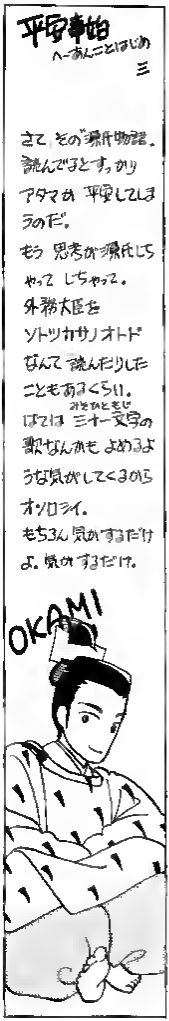
H-
HE...R ME OUT...
I'm O-!!
I'M...
YOU THINK I CAN JUST "CHILL OUT" OVER THIS!?
IF NOT BECAUSE OF THE EMPEROR'S DEMAND,
HE WOULDN'T HAVE APPROVED OF MY GENPUKU
OUR FATHER REALLY IS ONE DIE-HARD CONSERVATIVE GUY
THINK ABOUT IT. HOW ELSE COULD HE WITHSTAND LADY YUMENO'S STRIKE FOR TWO DAYS!?
.....
OH
I SEE.
THAT'S RIGHT!
AS LONG AS THERE'S NO ROYAL DIRECT ORDER,
YOUR MOGI CEREMONY WILL NEVER...
TAD TAD TAD TAD

RYUDE
G... GREAT NEWS!
JUST NOW HIS MAJESTY ...
EH!?
GRANTED A COMMAND TO HAVE LADY KIRA ENTER HER MOGI CEREMONY!
SADAIJIN LOST TO UDAIJIN IN THE DRAW FOR HOSTING THE GENPUKU FOR WEST MANOR'S KIRA-SAN
IT'S ALL BECAUSE
WHO IS WAKO
COUPLE
PUDO
IIN

VERY WELL THEN ARRANGE LADY KIRA A MOGI AS WELL
HE PLEADED WITH THE EMPEROR, WAILING.
OTHERWISE, HOW COULD I PEACEFULLY RETIRE AND STILL PRIDE MYSELF FOR HAVING SERVED YOUR MAJESTY ALL THESE YEARS!!
THEN PLEASE ALLOW ME BE THE PATRON FOR MY NIECE'S MOGI!
HE WAS DEVASTATED
THUD
!
MEANING THIS MOGI IS ALSO A "DIRECT ROYAL ORDER."
MY GENPUKU ?
WILL IT END PEACEFULLY
THIS IS REALLY GETTING OUT OF HAND
OH BOY
Someone get me smelling salts!!

And the day of the ceremony has come.
JUST BY LOOKING AT THE HOSTS FOR THIS MOGI AND GENPUKU
ONE KNOWS THEIR BRIGHT FUTURE IS SECURED
HOSTED BY NONE BUT SADAIJIN AND UDAIJIN, HIS MAJESTY'S GRAND COUNSELORS
THEIR FUTURE IS BOUND TO BE EXTRAORDINARILY FANCIFUL
HE MUST HAVE PURPOSEFULLY DELAYED HIS CHILDREN'S MOGI AND GENPUKU
JUST TO ROUSE HIS MAJESTY'S ATTENTION.
SADAIJIN-SAN WILL RETIRE HIMSELF AFTER THE MOGI.
JUDGING FROM THE SITUATION, THE SUCCESSOR CAN BE NO ONE BUT GON-SAN.
THE YOUNG MASTER HIMSELF WAS APPOINTED A FIFTH-RANKED COURTIER EVEN BEFORE THE GENPUKU.
THE YOUNG MISTRESS ALSO HAS BEEN IN HIS MAJESTY'S MEMORY EVEN BEFORE THE MOGI.
HER FUTURE CAN'T BE LESS THAN HIS MAJESTY'S FAVORITE COURT LADY.
WHAT A LUCKY YOUNG GIRL.
HOW RIGHT YOU ARE
.....



EVEN THOUGH THEY'RE OF A POWERFUL CLAN ALMOST AS GRAND AS A ROYAL FAMILY IN THE FIRST PLACE
BUT I KNOW...
SERIOUSLY
LISTENING TO ALL THESE TALKS SHOULD MAKE MY HEART SWELL WITH PRIDE

HONESTLY, I JUST CAN'T REJOICE AT THE MOMENT
THAT LORD KIRA IS ACTUALLY A GIRL AND LADY KIRA OF THE EAST MANOR IS BUT A BOY.
The West manor
KIRA-SAMA
I'M BACK, SIR.

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SA-YURI
ELEGANTLY BEAUTI-FUL! IT SUITS HER JUST PERFECT-LY
SO.....
HOW IS HE?
MY BROTHER OF THE EAST MANOR?
OH, YES, SIR
THEY SAID HE RAM-PAGED AROUND UNTIL AROUND NOON.
BUT NOW HAS NOW COOLED DOWN..
OR TO BE EXACT...
ACCEPTED THE FACT THAT THERE'S NO WAY OUT.

NO MOGI!
HE WAS UNINTENTIONALLY INVOLVED AND HAD TO ENTER A MOGI AGAINST HIS EVERY WISH AND WILL.
OH MY...
ALREADY FAINTED TWICE, THOUGH...
I'LL PAY HIM A VISIT AFTER THE CEREMONY.
I BROUGHT THIS ON HIM.
sigh
Serious
BUT MOST IMPORTANTLY, KIRA-SAMA.
OOPS
GENPUKU IS ABOUT TO BEGIN IN ANY MINUTE NOW
SO, YOU KNOW...!
YES!
Chat ter
DO NOT LET ANYONE CATCH ME AS A WOMAN !!

T/N Dainagon* = Great Councillor
Naidaijin** = Minister of the Center
Chuunagon*** = Counselor

ABSOLUTELY FIT TO BE MY THIRD SON-IN-LAW!!
REMARKABLY GRACEFUL POSTURE, SMART AND LIVELY DEMEANOR WITHOUT A DOUBT, HE'LL RISE TO A HIGH POSITION SOMEDAY!
HE EVEN EXCEEDS MY EXPECTATION!!
GOOD HEAVENS ...
AND AS HIDEOUS AS AN OGRE?
Hah!
WHA--! WHAT DID YOU SAY!?
COME ON MY 13 YEAR OLD IS A WONDERFUL MATCH...
BUT YOUR LADY DAUGHTER IS ALREADY A 19-YEAR-OLD 'AUNTIE'
MY SECOND DAUGHTER IS PERFECT FOR LORD KIRA I'LL HAVE TO SOUND HIM OUT...
THE AGE IS RIGHT THE FAMILY STATUS IS EQUAL
Fu Fu Fu
JUST WATCH ME. I'LL DO EVERYTHING TO WOO HIM!
DOSU!
SCLD!!

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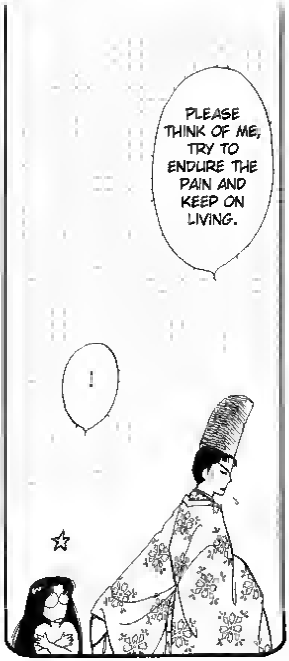
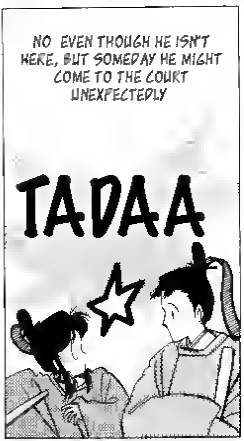
I'VE PREPARED TO BE A SUBJECT OF THESE INQUISITIVE GLARES...
BLAZING GLARE
DO THEY SUSPECT I'M A GIRL?
Unaware that she's being sized up as a son-in-law.
I SHALL NEVER LET LORD KIRA SLIP MY GRASP JUST WATCH ME!
...
I SHALL SUCCEED!
AND SNATCH HIM TO BE THIS UDAIJIN'S SON-IN-LAW...
CRAWL
SOMEONE IS WATCHING ME...
NOT THESE OLD MEN...
THAT PERSON
SEEMS TO HAVE DIFFERENT AGENDA...
AS IF HE HAS SOMETHING TO SAY TO ME

I'VE BEEN BUSY AND TOTALLY FORGOTTEN
RIGHT
THE MAN I MET WHEN I RAN AWAY TO KITASAGA
IT'S THAT MAN FROM KITASAGA !?
OR MAYBE
HE SAW ME WHEN I JUST CAME UP FROM THE WATER NAKED SO I BLURTED THE FIRST THING THAT CAME TO MY MIND
MY FATHER IS TRYING TO FORCE ME INTO A MARRIAGE AGAINST MY WILL EXTREMELY DISTRAUGHT, I WAS GOING TO WALK INTO THE DEEP TO LET THE STREAM CARRY ME DOWN AND DISAPPEAR --
DROWNING YOURSELF!?

HIS CLOTHES WERE OF THE FINEST QUALITY
THE CRYSTAL ROSARY WAS ALSO HIGHLY VALUABLE
PERHAPS HE'S WELL-BRED AND SOMEHOW HAS BECOME SUCH A HUMBLE AND TRUSTING PERSON...



MOREOVER, HE GAVE ME AN EXPENSIVE-LOOKING PURPLE CRYSTAL ROSARY



shocked!!
HOW DARE YOU DECEIVE HIS MAJESTY!!
DECAPI-TATION!
SFX. DONYORI - DEPRESSED
どんより...
KIRA-SAMA
JOLT
YOU LOOK PALE.
THE CELEBRATION IS ABOUT TO BEGIN
I'M FINE
JUST A LITTLE NERVOUS, THAT'S ALL.
OH. THAT'S UNDER-STAND-ABLE
THE CEREMONY WAS VERY GRAND

THE EAST MANSION'S KIRA-SAMA FAINTED SEVERAL TIMES DURING THE MOGI
WE ENDED UP HAVING MAIDS SUPPORT HER BOTH LEFT AND RIGHT.
ALIYA
THE AUDIENCE ALL SAID SHE'S AN EXTRAORDINARY BEAUTIFUL HIME-SAMA, A RARE GENTLE LADY OF THIS ERA.
SPY Gakuran Rise
AS FOR KIRA-SAMA, DO YOU KNOW EVERYONE PRAISED HOW YOU WERE EXTREMELY ELEGANT
AND REMARK-ABLE IN THE CEREMO-NIAL COSTUME
KIRA-SAMA, SIR
GONDAINAGON-DONO IS HERE TO SEE YOU.
THERE WAS A MAN SPYING ON YOU FROM THE GARDEN?

ISN'T THAT SAKONNO-SHOUSHOU-SAN?
EH!?
A TALL, GOOD-LOOKING MAN IN THE GARDEN?
COULD BE A TALL MAN A GOOD-LOOKING ONE
I DON'T KNOW
PERHAPS
I FELT SOMEONE GAWKING AT ME ALL THE TIME DURING THE CEREMONY
YES, FATHER
SFX SAKONNO-SHOUSHOU
左近少将!?!
AN OUTRAGEOUS RUMOR HAS SPREAD SAYING HOW ONCE YOU ARE APPOINTED YOU'LL BECOME HIS MOST PROMINENT RIVAL
THE MAN TRIED HIS BEST TO STEAL YOUR THUNDER. HE DELIBERATELY DRESSED ESPECIALLY FANCIFUL TODAY
AND KEPT STARING AT YOU DURING THE CEREMONY
GEHHH!?
KEPT STARING AT ME !?
SFX ZUUUN
THAT SAKONNO-SHOUSHOU
what's wrong?

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WHAT IF SAKNONNO-SHOUSHOU WHO KEPT MOCKING ME AS 'IMMATURE BRAT' OR 'PRE-GENPUKU KID', IS THE SAME MAN I MET AT KITASAGA!
AND NOW HE REGARDS ME AS HIS ARCH ENEMY?
I'M A DEAD MEAT !!
SOMETHING BAD HAS HAPPENED, SIR!
SFX BOKUU - STARTLED
THE SECRET IS OUT!?
KIRA-SAN OF THE EAST MANSION HAS FAINTED FOR THE THIRD TIME.
Slip!

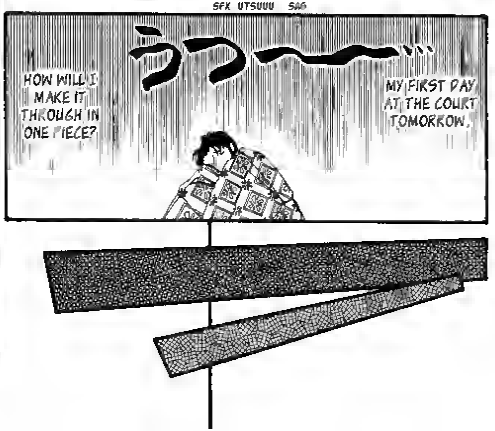
平安革始
〜あんことはじめ 四

SAYURI

一応 取材と称して京都へは行った。前もって ガイドブックなんかも買い込みチェックも万端。ムダなく目的地をまわれるハズだった。そう。ハズだったんだけど。
そのガイドブックを家に忘れていったりしてなきゃね。

だから うちには同じガイドブックが2冊ある。京都で同じのを買ったのだ。
悲しい。

SFX UTSUUU SAD



The Royal Household
Thump
thump
thump
thump
ANYWAY
I'LL BE AS INCONSPICUOUS AS POSSIBLE
I'LL JUST KEEP A LOW PROFILE
UNTIL I KNOW WHO THAT KITASAGA MAN IS,
LORD KIRA
YES, SIR.
NO NEED TO BE NERVOUS.
RELAX WE'LL DO EVERYTHING JUST LIKE WE REHEARSED.
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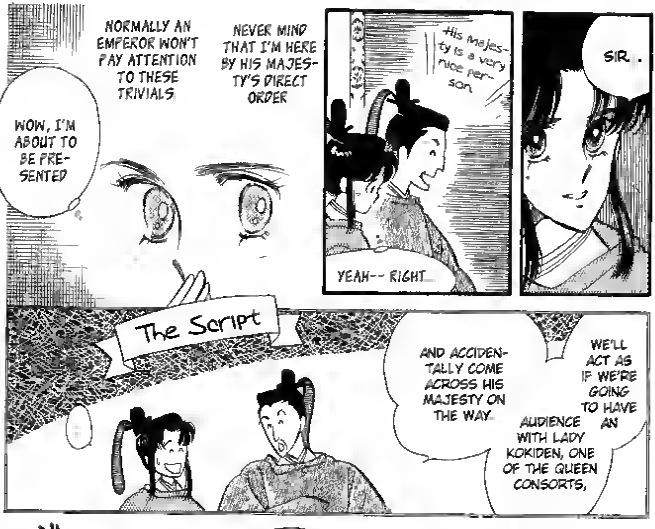
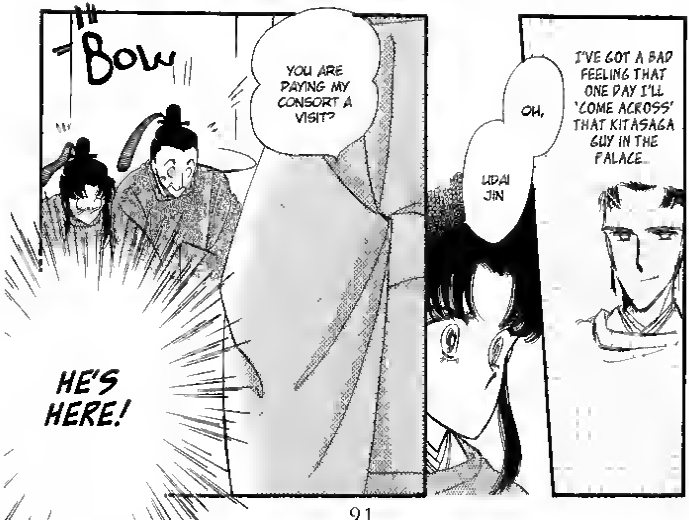

NORMALLY AN EMPEROR WON'T PAY ATTENTION TO THESE TRIVIALS
NEVER MIND THAT I'M HERE BY HIS MAJESTY'S DIRECT ORDER
WOW, I'M ABOUT TO BE PRESENTED
His Majesty is a very nice person
YEAH-- RIGHT
SIR. .
The Script
AND ACCIDENTALLY COME ACROSS HIS MAJESTY ON THE WAY.
WE'LL ACT AS IF WE'RE GOING TO HAVE AN AUDIENCE WITH LADY KOKIDEN, ONE OF THE QUEEN CONSORTS,


Bow
YOU ARE PAYING MY CONSORT A VISIT?
HE'S HERE!
OH,
UDAI JIN
I'VE GOT A BAD FEELING THAT ONE DAY I'LL 'COME ACROSS' THAT KITASAGA GUY IN THE PALACE..

THE EMPEROR !!
Following the script
TODAY HE HOPES TO BE GRANTED A ROYAL AUDIENCE TO OFFER HIS HUMBLE SERVICE TO YOUR MAJESTY
YOUR MAJESTY,
WE'VE NEVER SEEN THIS YOUNG MAN BEFORE
WHO IS HE?
GOSH! I'M SO NERVOUS!
What do I do!
WHERE DID I SMELL IT BEFORE?
HIS VOICE SOUNDS YOUNGER THAN I IMAGINED
AND THIS FRAGRANCE IS OF PLUM SCENT
.....
HUH!?
C...

COULD IT BE
NO
I NEED TO HEAR IT ONE MORE TIME TO BE ABSOLUTELY CERTAIN
YOUNG LORD
WE TRUST YOU WILL DO YOUR JOB WELL
NOOOOOO!!
Lord Kira! That's your cue to look up!
.....

FALL
!!

THE DAUGHTER OF GONDAINAGON !!

THAT DAY
I WAS BORED TO DEATH WITH ALL THE PALACE POLITICS,
I SNUCK OUT OF THE CAPITAL TO KITASAGA
AT SAGANO
LIVED MY NURSEMAID WHO WAS LADY-IN-WAITING TO MY GRANDMOTHER
I SEE YOUR MAJESTY HASN'T CHANGED HIS CASUAL WAYS AT ALL
SUDDENLY MAKING A PRIVATE TRIP LIKE THIS
THE SISTER OF THIS LORD KIRA----!

HO HO HO
DARE I REMIND YOU YOU'RE NOT A CROWN PRINCE ANYMORE?
I JUST DON'T WORRY, I'LL BE BACK IN NO TIME.
HOPE NURSE WOULD LEND ME A SYMPATHETIC EAR.
OH
A MATTER OF YOUR CONSORTS, PERHAPS?
IT'S COME TO MY KNOWLEDGE
THAT LADY UMESUBO IN A TANTRUM SWORE SHE'LL LEAVE THE COURT.
FOR SHE HASN'T BEEN ABLE TO PRODUCE YOUR SON,
AND HOW SHE'S BEEN GRUMBLING ON YOUR LACK OF "VISITS."
OH, AREN'T YOU WELL-INFORMED.
THE QUEEN CONSORTS ARE A VICIOUS LOT INDEED
OH PLEASE... I MAY HAVE RETIRED TO SPEND MY FINAL DAYS IN PEACE, BUT MY GRAPEVINES REMAIN.
We live in a cutting-edge era your majesty. My information is real-time.
RUSTLE
RUSTLE
I see.

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SHE'S BEEN MY CONSORT EVER SINCE I WAS A CROWN PRINCE. ALWAYS POLITE AND HUMBLE
WAIT, YOUR MAJESTY. I THINK I GET THE PICTURE.
Lady Rekeden
" Age 27 (Five years older than the emperor) "
THE FIRST ONE TO SPEAK OF LEAVING WAS REIKEIDEN.
YOU KNOW
THOSE THREE ARE FOREVER AT EACH OTHERS' THROATS.
THE ROOT OF THE PROBLEM IS LADY UMETSUBO, WASN'T IT?
YESS ...
BEHIND THE SCENES, EACH ROYAL CONSORT IS SUPPORTED BY GROUPS OF POWERFUL COURTIERS
YOUR MAJESTY MUST FIND IT UNCOMFORTABLE TO MAINTAIN A POLITICAL POSITION UNDER THE CIRCUMSTANCES...
:
MOCKING LADY REKEDEN'S AGE,
AND THE PLAIN LOOKS OF LADY KOKIDEN WHO YOU MARRIED BECAUSE OF HER FAMILY'S "PROLIFIC" HISTORY
THIS ROYAL CONSORT PRIDES HERSELF ON HER EXCEPTIONAL LOOKS AND BETTER EDUCATION SHE ALWAYS SNUBS THE OTHER TWO LADIES.
Aren't you nattering today

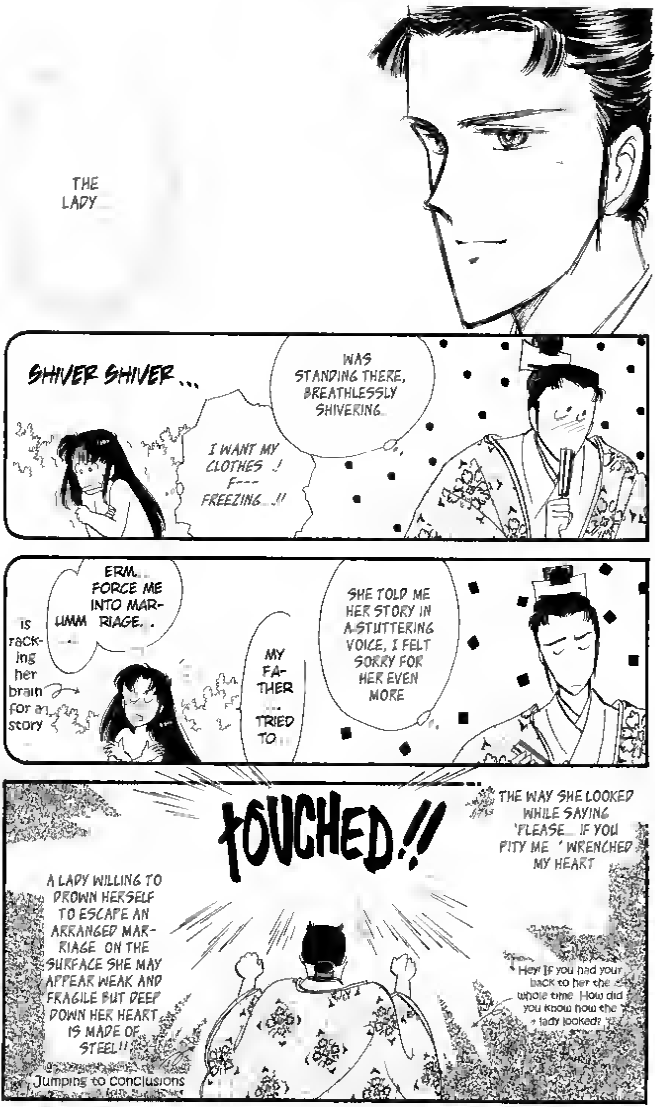
Lady Umetsubo
I DROPPED A HINT ABOUT AN HEIR BY MENTIONING MY LACK OF A HEALTHY SON SHE.
THEN I'LL JUST LEAVE AND TAKE A VEIL
SATISFIED, YOUR MAJESTY!?
JUST WENT BALLISTIC
Lady Kokiden
AVENGED WITH A SARCASTIC REMARK.
NO WORRY. I'LL INTRODUCE YOU TO A GOOD MONK
ISN'T SHE JUST SO CHARMING?
AS IF RIGHT ON CUE, THE OH! SO PRIM AND MODEST KOKIDEN...
WEARY
MAIDS AND LADIES-IN-WAITING WERE INVOLVED AND ALL HELL BROKE LOOSE
THEY SAID UMTESUBO WAS SO FURIOUS A SHAMAN WAS HIRED TO PERFORM A HEXING CEREMONY ON KOKIDEN
HRH NAGANOMIYA DOESN'T ACT LIKE A CROWN PRINCESS AT ALL
PEOPLE JUST TURN THEIR FACES AWAY WHEN THE SUBJECT IS MENTIONED
THAT'S TRUE
HER BEING THE CROWN-PRINCESS WORRIES ME
BESIDES, THERE'S THE MATTER OF MY SISTER, NAGANOMIYA

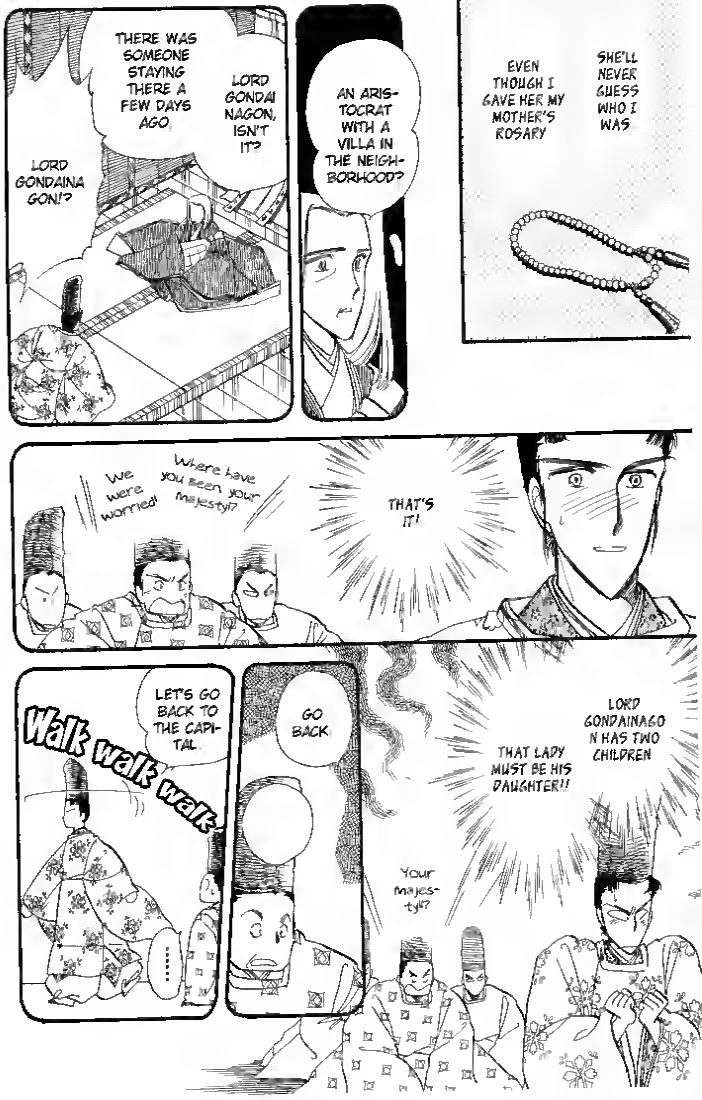
PLEASE NURSE
You've got a daughter And even a son, even though he died since birth.
RIGHT?
BUT YOUR MAJESTY ISN'T ACTUALLY BARREN,
Depressed
BLAME YOUR BAD LUCK IN WOMEN, YOUR MAJESTY.
It's because I never have a private moment by myself
FU FU
SO MAY WE SAY YOUR "PLAYING HOOKY" IS PROBABLY YOUR ONLY LAST CHANCE?
YEAH
HOW CAN AN EMPEROR MEET HIS PERFECT DREAM-GIRL BY FATE?
TOTAL-LY HOPE-LESS.
HMPH
EH?
LIKE PRINCE GENJIHIKARU IN "HIKARU GENJI MONO-GATARI"", YOU KNOW.
YOUR MAJESTY MAY FINAL-LY MEET YOUR OWN "LADY MURASAKI" ♥

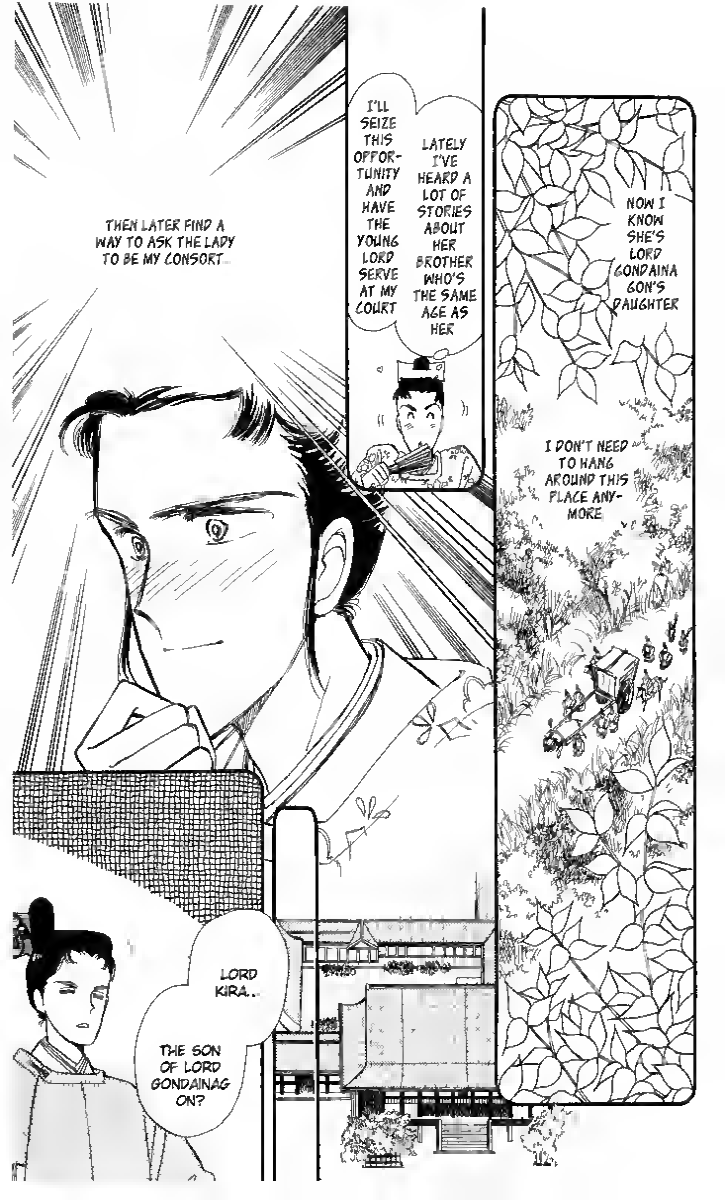
(* HIKARU GENJI MONOGATARI, "TALES OF GENJI" THE GREAT CLASSIC OF JAPANESE LITERATURE (11TH CENTU RY) ABOUT THE STORY OF GENJI THE "SHINING PRINCE" AND HIS EXPERIENCE AS A GREAT LOVER AS HE MOVES FROM ONE WOMAN TO ANOTHER

I DIDN'T TAKE NURSE'S WORD SERIOUSLY THEN
ho ho ho -
OF COURSE, THAT WAS A JOKE
You make it sound so easy
GAVE ME A HARD TIME.
PLEASE RETURN TO THE PALACE BEFORE ANYTHING HAPPENS
BUT MY PERSONAL BODY-GUARD WHO CAME ALONG
AND I ENDED UP MEETING THE LADY OF KITASAGA!
BLUSH
Return, please
SO I SNUCK OUT OF NURSE'S HOUSE JUST TO VEX HIM

I DIDN'T EXPECT A MEETING BY FATE OR ANYTHING OF THE KIND
THEY MUST BE PANICKING RIGHT NOW
WATER SPLASH..?
RUSTLE RUSTLE
EH?!
I... I EDGED CLOSER AND WALKED INTO IT WITHOUT REALIZING
WHO KNEW THERE WOULD BE A WOMAN WITHOUT A SINGLE PIECE OF CLOTHES IN SUCH A PLACE...!?
Seriously I'm not doing it on purpose I just unintentionally dared to accidentally accuse me of being a peeping pervert


THE LADY...
SHIVER SHIVER...
I WANT MY CLOTHES ! F--- FREEZING..!!
WAS STANDING THERE, BREATHLESSLY SHIVERING..
ERM. FORCE ME INTO MAR- UMM RIAGE..
is racking her brain for a story
MY FA- THER ... TRIED TO
SHE TOLD ME HER STORY IN A STUTTERING VOICE, I FELT SORRY FOR HER EVEN MORE
TOUCHED!!
A LADY WILLING TO DROWN HERSELF TO ESCAPE AN ARRANGED MARRIAGE ON THE SURFACE SHE MAY APPEAR WEAK AND FRAGILE BUT DEEP DOWN HER HEART IS MADE OF STEEL!!
Jumping to conclusions
THE WAY SHE LOOKED WHILE SAYING 'PLEASE... IF YOU PITY ME ' WRENCHED MY HEART
" Hey! If you had your back to her the whole time! How did you know how the lady looked?


THERE WAS SOMEONE STAYING THERE A FEW DAYS AGO.
LORD GONDAI NAGON, ISN'T IT?
LORD GONDAINA GON!?
AN ARISTOCRAT WITH A VILLA IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD?
EVEN THOUGH I GAVE HER MY MOTHER'S ROSARY
SHE'LL NEVER GUESS WHO I WAS
We were worried!
Where have you been, your majesty!?
THAT'S IT!
LET'S GO BACK TO THE CAPITAL.
Walk walk walk
.....
GO BACK
Your majesty!?
THAT LADY MUST BE HIS DAUGHTER!!
LORD GONDAINAGON HAS TWO CHILDREN


THEN LATER FIND A WAY TO ASK THE LADY TO BE MY CONSORT...
I'LL SEIZE THIS OPPORTUNITY AND HAVE THE YOUNG LORD SERVE AT MY COURT
LATELY I'VE HEARD A LOT OF STORIES ABOUT HER BROTHER WHO'S THE SAME AGE AS HER
NOW I KNOW SHE'S LORD GONDAINA GON'S DAUGHTER
I DON'T NEED TO HANG AROUND THIS PLACE ANY-MORE
LORD KIRA..
THE SON OF LORD GONDAINAG ON?

LORD KIRA'S DANCE TO ENTERTAIN THE GUESTS WAS UTTERLY CHARMING!
LAST YEAR I WAS INVITED TO A HAGI-FLOWERS PARTY AT LORD GONDAINAGON'S MANSION
OH, HE'S A COMELY YOUNG MAN, YOUR MAJESTY .
ITS GRACEFULNESS MAY EXCEED THAT OF AN UNSEASONED PROFESSIONAL DANCING GIRL
OH!
THAT HE SUCCEEDED IN ASKING FOR THE LADY'S HAND .?
DON'T TELL ME. .
CLENCH
GRR
THINKING SHE MUST BE A RAVISHING BEAUTY HE HINTED HIS INTEREST TO HER FATHER
WHEN ONE OF THE GUESTS LEARNED HOW GONDAINAGON-SAMA'S SON AND DAUGHTER LOOK SO ALIKE
ahem
That "one of the guests".

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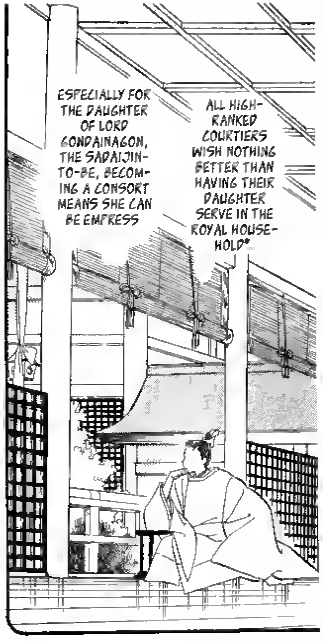
A-
A NUN!?
I WON'T LET HER MARRY ANYONE!!
NONSENSE!
SHE'S GOING TO BE A NUN.
LORD GONDAINAGON FLUSHED WITH FURY AND ROARED
OF COURSE NOT.
LIKE ME...!?
AND WHAT DID THE COURTIER DO?
AH
OH
.....
THAT PERSON MEEKLY RETREATED AS HE THEN UNDERSTOOD LORD GONDAINAGON MUST BE SAVING HIS GIRL FOR SOME NOBLE OF VERY HIGH BIRTH. THUS HIS HARSH REFUSAL.
YOUR MAJESTY.
A NOBLE OF VERY HIGH BIRTH...?
.....

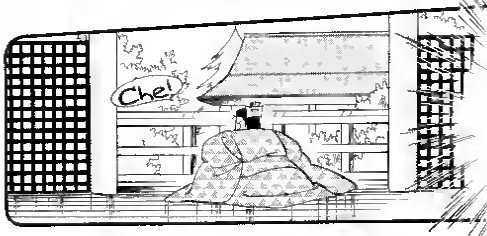
BECAUSE HE NEVER ONCE MENTIONED HIS DAUGHTER IN THE MY PRESENCE AT ALL
BUT LORD GONDAINAGON MAY NOT HAVE AN INTENTION OF THAT


ESPECIALLY FOR THE DAUGHTER OF LORD GONDAINAGON, THE SADAIJIN-TO-BE, BECOMING A CONSORT MEANS SHE CAN BE EMPRESS
ALL HIGH-RANKED COURTIERS WISH NOTHING BETTER THAN HAVING THEIR DAUGHTER SERVE IN THE ROYAL HOUSEHOLD*

HOWEVER

CONSIDERING HIS INFAMOUS MODEST PERSONALITY,

HE PROBABLY DARES NOT PUSH HIS DAUGHTER INTO MY HAND



DAMNIT I'M WAITING HERE WITH ARMS WIDE OPEN!!

Ah !?
MY FATHER IS TRYING TO FORCE ME TO MARRY SOMEONE I DON'T LOVE.
MAYBE
MY DEAR LADY WAS GOING TO DROWN HERSELF BECAUSE SHE WAS BEING FORCED TO ENTER THE COURT ...!?
がくぜん
SFX FRETS
BUT LORD GONDAINAGON LOOKS LIKE SOMEONE WHO WILL LISTEN TO HIS DAUGHTER'S OPINION IN THIS MATTER
Dear daddy has a wonderful proposition for you.
寿

WHAT IF I ASK FOR HER HAND MYSELF?
WILL SHE TAKE HER OWN LIFE AGAIN?
I WONDER IF LORD GONDAINAGON BACKED OFF AFTER THAT...?
COMMIT SUI-CIDE!!
TO AVOID THE INEVI-TABLE FATE, SHE DECIDED TO
No way out
WHILE I WAS RACKING MY BRAIN FOR A SOLUTION,
A MAGNIFICENT PALACE WITH NO CHARMING NOBLEMEN AND BEAUTIFUL FLOWER-LIKE LADY COURT-IERS FLOCKING AROUND
HOW MELAN-CHOLIC
HOW TRUE.
LORD UDAIJIN WAS MAKING SMALL TALK

WITH YOUR MAJESTY'S WISDOM AND MAJESTIC LOOKS,
SUCH MELANCHOLIC ATMOSPHERE IS TRULY A SHAME.
Ch!
OH! YOU'RE SAYING MY QUEEN CONSORTS AREN'T CHARMING, RIGHT?
THEY'RE ALWAYS AT EACH OTHER'S THROATS
AND I AM BUT LACK A STRONG HAND TO HOLD THEM IN PEACE.
Stammer
SO I...
PERHAPS BECAUSE I AM AN IDLE BORE
JUMP
THAT WAS WHEN UDAIJIN BLURTED OUT LORD KIRA'S NAME.
I QUICKLY GRABBED THE CHANCE TO REEL HIM IN.
I DO WISH TO MEET SOMEONE OF SUCH REPUTED FAME SOON.
HAVE YOUR SON APPOINTED.
Got
cha
N Not at all your majesty!
Stammer

HOW-EVER
THEY MAY NOT BE TWINS OR BORN FROM THE SAME MOTHER
BUT LORD KIRA AND THE LADY OF KITASAGA MUST AT LEAST SHARE SOME RESEM-BLANCE
I'll try some in-formation about her from Lord Kira
Giddy Giddy
I HAD NO IDEA THEY'D LOOK THIS MUCH ALIKE...!

THIS WAY, SIR
HURRY !
HUH ?
CHATTER CHATTER
Hmd Hmd Hmd
ANYWAY, IT TURNED OUT INVITING HIM TO COURT WAS A BRILLIANT IDEA.
chuckle chuckle
HE LOOKED TERRIBLY PALE AND SHAKY IT REMINDED ME OF THAT LADY OF KITASAGA
WAS IT BECAUSE IT WAS HIS FIRST AUDIENCE WITH AN EMPEROR?
Reminiscing
ONE MINUTE HE LOOKED TOTALLY LIFELESS, THE NEXT HE HAD A SILLY SMILE .
THEN, A WHILE AGO, HE HAD A MOST PECULIAR EXPRESSION ON HIS FACE
I'M SO WORRIED. FIRST HIS MAJESTY'S ABRUPT RETURN TO SEIRYOUDEN PALACE FROM A CASUAL STROLL
RUSH
THE ROYAL DOCTOR, TENYAKUKA MI-SAMA, ISN'T HERE YET!?
I'M NOT SICK!
THE ROYAL DOCTOR WILL BE HERE IN NO TIME
PLEASE LAY DOWN AND REST FOR A MINUTE!
NOW NOW
EH?
DEFINITELY ABSOLUTELY NOT A GOOD SIGN!

I ENDED UP PLAYING HALF-A-DAY TRUANT AND THOUGHT OF NOTHING BUT THE LADY OF KITASAGA
AFTER MEETING WITH KIRA THIS MORNING,
IT CAN'T BE HELPED
sizzled
Someone writes me an herbal contraception!
HOW DID LORD KIRA'S FIRST DAY AT COURT GO?
LORD KIRA LEFT LONG AGO, YOUR MAJESTY
HE SAID HE FELT LIGHT-HEADED ALL OF THE SUDDEN
I SEE..
GLOOM
Ah,
SEE? HIS COLOR REALLY DOESN'T LOOK GOOD
GET THE PATRIARCH TO CHASE AWAY EVIL FORCES..!!
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As for
Lord Kira who left the court for Sanjou mansion...
.....
I told you I'm not sick!
panic
H-HEY!
I'M REALLY TOTALLY FINE!
frantic
Pale
WHAT DO I DO?
WHO WOULD HAVE THOUGHT THE LOCAL NOBLE I MET AT KITASAGA...
WAS THE EMPEROR...?!

As a result
HE MUST HAVE KNOWN I WAS A WOMAN
JUDGING FROM HIS SHOCKED EXPRESSION
HIS MAJESTY MUST BE AWFULLY PISSED
MY GENPUKU AND GETTING INTO THE COURT WERE A DIRECT ROYAL COMMAND
NO...
HOW AM I GOING TO BREAK THIS NEWS TO FATHER—?

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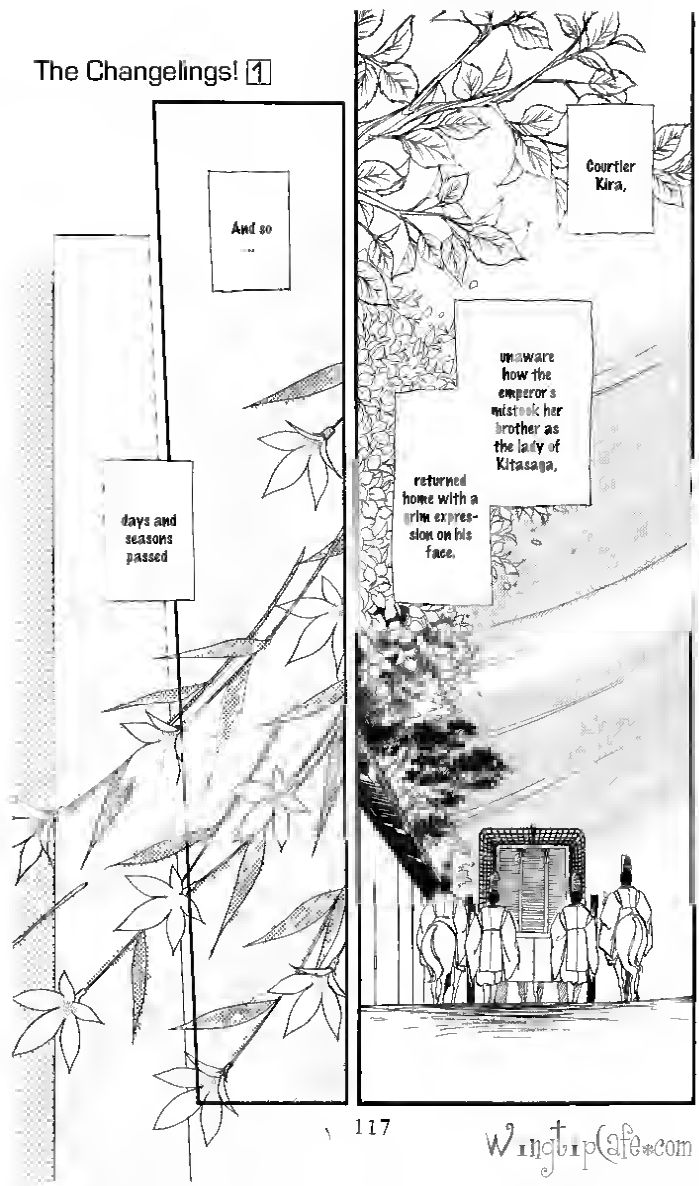
And so ...
days and seasons passed
Courtier Kira,
unaware how the emperor's mistook her brother as the lady of Kitasaga,
returned home with a grim expression on his face.

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This manga is to be read
from Right to Left

Lucky master!!
while her father Gondainagon, rose up to the position of
The secret of her true gender hadn't been exposed. Also, she was promoted to Sanmmo Chuujou*
SANJOU MANSION
Mean while
THE NORTH-EASTERN WING
Lady Kira, the brother
The young courtier Kira
since that first day, had been serving the court for almost 2 years

(T/N: *CHUUJOU = A COURT RANK EQUAL TO LT. GENERAL)

NEE-SAMA!?
HUH? YOU READ WAKANROUEISHUU POETRY ANTHOLOGIES* TOO?
That's what a young courtier's Expected to read!
IT'S BEEN A WHILE ARE YOU DOING WELL?
WHAT'S UP?
NOT AS WELL AS YOU
Smile
MY HEALTH HAS IMPROVED DRAMATICALLY SINCE I MOVED FROM THE EAST MANSION TO NORTH-EASTERN WING.
BUT
PROBABLY BECAUSE NO MORE OF MOTHER'S PRAYING.

CT/N * WAKANROUEISHUU = A JAPANESE POETRY ANTHOLOGY COMPILED IN 1013, COMPRISED 588 CHINESE POETRIES AND 216 WAKA POEMS FOR RECITING)

Y-YOU YOU!
I'M NOT THE LEAST BIT HAPPY ABOUT IT!!
AND HOW'S YOUR WORK TODAY!!?
REALLY
TOO BAD YOU'RE A MAN.
I'LL BET YOU'VE RECEIVED A MASSIVE AMOUNT OF LOVE POEMS FROM GUYS
OH WELL
I TOOK AN ABSENCE CLAIMING IT'S MY MONO-IMI DAY
HEAR ME, BROTHER DEAR A COURTIER'S LIFE IS EXHAUSTING!
YOU WERE THE ONE WHO WANTED TO BECOME A COURTIER, WEREN'T YOU?
THOUGH FATHER KEEPS SAYING THE COUNTRY IS IN ITS MOST PEACEFUL ERA,
BEHIND THE SCENES THE POLITICAL ARENA IS DOWNRIGHT TERRIFYING.

BUT TURN YOUR BACK AND THEN ALL THE DARKEST DECEITS BREAK LOOSE.
HARMONY
TO YOUR FACE, EVERY-ONE FINDS THEY HAVE NO OBVIOUS OBJEC-TIONS
EVERYTHING IN THE COURT'S ASSEMBLY IS ALL ABOUT POLITICS
NOOO!!
THE NEXT THING HE KNOWS HE'S ALREADY BEEN KICKED OUT AND MARKED A BLACK SHEEP
?
GO21P
GO21P
GO21P
GO21P
SEEPING FROM THE COURT TO THE WORLD OUTSIDE
IF ONE DARES TO RAISE A BLATANT OPPOSITION, SOON HE'LL FIND HIMSELF SUBJECTED TO AWFUL SCANDALS SEEPING FROM THE COURT TO THE WORLD OUTSIDE
EVEN THOUGH THERE'S NO ACTUAL BLOODSHED, BUT THINGS AREN'T AS SMOOTH AS FATHER ADVERTISED. IT'S TRULY THE WORLD OF LIES AND BACK-STABBING!
IN OTHER WORD, HE WHO RAISES A DIFFERENT OPINION OUGHT TO BE CRUSHED TO DEATH
IS THE SECRET OF MY TRUE GENDER EXPOSED!?
EVERY TIME PEOPLE START WHISPER-ING, IT FREAKS MY BRAIN OUT.
THERE-FORE...

I'M SO GLAD
THAT I DON'T HAVE TO BE IN THE COURT.
OH!
NOT THAT I DON'T WANT TO BE THERE.
Crash
PUNCH
I'M GOING CRAZY!
NO MATTER WHAT, THE EMPEROR IS SUCHHHH A GREAT MAN!
BUT IN THE COURT, HE LOOKS EVERY INCH OF A GRACEFUL ARISTOCRAT HOW STRANGE
OUR FIRST MEETING AT KITASAGA, I MISTOOK HIM FOR A LOCAL NOBLEMAN BECAUSE OF HIS

I've been keeping a low profile. No flaunting. No showing off
BUT YOU BET HE'D NEVER HAVE A SLIGHTEST IDEA THAT I'M A WOMAN!!
I FEEL KIND OF GUILTY DECEIVING HIM
HIS MAJESTY ENTRUSTED ME TO SERVE UNDER THE CROWN
COMPARING TO ME...
CROSS-DRESSING AS A WOMAN, BEING SHOVED INTO MOGI AGAINST MY WILL...
RECEIVING LOVE POEMS FROM GUYS. AND ON TOP OF THAT...
AT THE END OF THE DAY, YOU'RE JUST HAPPY SERVING IN THE COURT AREN'T YOU!?
WORRYING SICK OVER YOUR SECRET, MY ASS
WHAT?
.....

YOU GOING TO LEAVE ME IN THIS STATE FOR THE REST OF MY LIFE!?
RIGHT!!?
UNTIL THE DAY I DIE, IS THAT RIGHT!?
...
PANT
GASP!!
MY LADY!?
Someone gets me smelling salts!
Stat
LADY KIRA!!
...
A LOVE POEM FROM SAISHOU-NO-CHUUJOU?

平安車始
へ～あんこばじめ
五

京都は バスの街である。バス路線がとても充実しているから便利がいい バス なのだが ｜
わたしはことごとく 間違ってバスに乗ってしまうのだった。
で、あわてて降りて元のバス停まで歩いて戻る。これを1日に4回はやった。
それも 夏の炎天下。すーっかり日焼けしてしまいましたわ。街中で ｜

WAS THAT WHY HE HAD A FIT?
OH WELL
HE CAN'T BE HAPPY RECEIVING LOVE POEMS FROM OTHER GUYS ASKING FOR COURTSHIP
MY BROTHER REALLY IS A MAN AFTER ALL
That guy's POEM is as sweet as USUAL!
LOOKS LIKE SAISHOUNO-CHUUJOU WON'T BACK DOWN EASILY
HASN'T KIRA-NO-CHUUJOU COME BACK FROM HIS MONO-IMI* LEAVE YET?
YEAH WITHOUT KIRA-SAMA
ISN'T IT LONG THIS TIME?
IT'S AS IF THE COURT WAS ROBBED OF LANTERNS

(*MONO-IMI - AN UNLUCKY DAY EACH PERSON'S IS DIFFERENT ONE'S SUPPOSED TO CONFINE ONESELF IN TO ONE'S HOUSE ON THAT DAY BUT ACTUALLY IT'S JUST AN EXCUSE TO SKIP WORK)

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LEAVING THE OTHER COURTIERS... OH... MILES AWAY!
THAT'S WHY CHUUJOU-SAMA AND SAISHOUNO-CHUUJO STEAL ALL THE COURT'S HEARTS, WITH EACH OWNING HALF OF THE POPULARITY
NOT TO MENTION HIS BOYISH GOOD LOOKS! SO CUTE!
NOT EVEN ONCE HAS KIRA-SAMA SHOWN ARROGANCE OR ACTED SELF-IMPORTANT
FOR A HIGH-RANKED COURTIER WHOSE GENPUKU WAS A ROYAL COMMAND AND WAS ENLISTED BY HIS MAJESTY
BUT SAISHOUNO-CHUUJOU IS VERY DIFFERENT FROM KIRA-CHUUJOU MY... MY... AIN'T HE A PLAYER!
KYU
BUT THAT'S WHAT MAKES HIM IRRESISTIBLE
I WISH HE'D "PLAY" WITH ME SOMETIMES
THEN, WOULD YOU GO TO VIEW THE MOON TOGETHER WITH ME TONIGHT?
KYAAAH! IT'S HIM! IN THE FLESH OH MY GOD
THUMP
THUMP
THUMP

CHUCKLE
OF COURSE
SAISHOUNO-CHUUJOU
POPULAR AS USUAL,
I TAKE EVERY ROMANCE VERY SERIOUSLY
If you ask me
I'M NOT A SECOND-RATE PLAYBOY FRIVOLOUS WITH LOVE
CHE! PREGENPUKU KID
His jealousy of Kira dated back to pre-genpuku. He regarded Kira as his archrival
and often spoke of Kira with sneer
snicker
But seeing Courtier Kira in person shook him to the core
MY
HE'S NOTHING LIKE I IMAGINED
For your information
Saishouno-Chuujou was none other than Sakonno-Shoushou
Was promoted from Shoushou to Chuujou

Pat
HIS SISTER, LADY KIKA WHO THEY SAY RESEMBLES HIM MUST BE A REAL BEAUTY
JUDGING FROM HIS EXCEPTIONALLY GOOD LOOKS,
Besides,
AS OF TODAY, BOTH OF THEM HAVE BECOME BESTFRIENDS YOUR MAJESTY
I CAN'T HELP BUT ASTOUND AT HIS SWIFT CHANGE OF ATTITUDE
THE REAL AGENDA WAS TO WIN THE LADY SISTER'S HEART,
MY ATTITUDE TOWARD KIRA IS NOTHING LIKE THAT...
EVEN YOUR MAJESTY MAKES FUN OF ME?
and what attitude is it?
SAISHO UNO-CHUUJOU?
THAT'S THE TALENT COMES WITH BEING A PLAYBOY,
PERHAPS

WE COURTIERS SHOWERED HER WITH LOVE POEMS AIMING TO WIN HER HEART, HOWEVER...
FASCINATED BY LADY KIRA'S REPUTATION AS A RAVISHING BEAUTY,
Amazed by his persistence
THAT'S SOME DEVOTION
200?
BUT THE NUMBER OF LOVE POEMS YOU WROTE TO LADY KIRA
HAS EXCEEDED 200 IN TOTAL, SO I HEARD!
GENTLEMEN, LAY DOWN YOUR HOPE.
SHE'LL BECOME A NUN.
YEAH, SHE CAN'T GET MARRIED EVER!
MY DAUGHTER IS SEVERAL TIMES SHYER THAN A NORMAL
GOT KNOCKED DOWN FLAT BY SADAIJIN'S HIGH GUARD!
IT'S TRUE
HOW PASSIONATE YOU ARE
I ADMIRE YOU
AS A RESULT, THOSE WHO WISHED TO MARRY LADY KIRA DISAPPEARED ONE AFTER ANOTHER
THESE PAST TWO YEARS, THE ONLY ONE REMAINS FIRMLY DETERMINED IS SAISHOUNOCHUUJOU
I USED TO ASK KIRA TO BRIDGE MY LOVE.
BUT HIS SISTER MUST BE TERRIBLY DEAR TO HIM

Brood
I SEE
UNDERSTANDABLE
I HAD NO CHOICE BUT CONTINUE WRITING HER LOVE POEMS. THE NEXT THING I KNEW, IT HAS GONE BEYOND 200
LENT ME ABSOLUTELY NO SUPPORT WHATSOEVER, YOUR MAJESTY.
OH
N-NOTHING...
EH?
I WAS THINKING THAT SAISHOUNOCHUUJOU IS SUCH A TRUE FRIEND, ACKNOWLEDGING KIRA'S CONCERN OF HIS SISTER...
I'd rather say he's unhelpful friend.
.....
DURING KIRA'S FIRST DAYS AT THE COURT,
I KEPT THINKING OF THE LADY I MET AT KITASAGA...
AT THE END, I CASUALLY DROPPED A QUESTION ABOUT HER
OH, YES..
YOUR SISTER...
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THUD
I WONDER HOW SHE IS DOING RIGHT NOW.
thud?
That time
KIRA!?
WAS SHE THE LADY I MET AT KITASAGA?
SHAKE
SHAKE
KIRA!?
S...
SOMEBODY!
AH!
I- I DEEPLY APOLOGIZE FOR MY ILL MANNER, YOUR MAJESTY!
PLEASE DO NOT BE ALARMED.
BUT
I'M FINE! YOUR MAJESTY NEEDS NOT TO BE WORRIED
I JUST FEEL DISTRESSED EVERY TIME I HEARD ABOUT "KITASAGA"
Oh

MY SISTER IS OVER-SENSITIVE AND OFTEN VIEWS THE WORLD IN BLACK AND WHITE
SHE MISTOOK THAT FATHER WISHED HER TO MARRY ONE OF THOSE LORDS
WHEN FATHER PRESENTED THE COURTIERS' LOVE POEMS ADDRESSING TO HER,
THE FACT IS...
MY FATHER DOESN'T KNOW ABOUT IT,
MY SISTER ONCE TRIED TO DROWN HERSELF IN KITASAGA
NOW WHENEVER I HEAR OF KITASAGA, I INSTANTLY CONNECT IT WITH MY SISTER'S SUICIDE ATTEMPT.
IT PAINS ME EVEN NOW
.....
SHE FOUND THE COURAGE TO GO ON LIVING
AND NOW DOES THE LADY BEAR IT THESE DAYS?
HER DAYS ARE FILLED WITH PRAYER, YOUR MAJESTY
IT'S REALLY HER...!

I SEE.
THE PURPLE CRYSTAL ROSARY ISN'T AT ALL USELESS
SO THE CHANTING OFTEN HEARD FROM THE SANJOU MANSION BELONGS TO HER
IT PAINED ME TO SEE KIKA
SINCE THEN I AVOID MENTIONING ABOUT LADY KIKA
WHEN KIKA IS WITH ME,
I MAGICALLY FORGET ABOUT THAT LADY.
THE FACE THAT NEVER SHOWS A SIGN OF FEAR
THE CARE-FREE LAUGHTER,
SOMETIMES,
FOR A MOMENT, MAKE ME THINK MY LADY WAS ACTUALLY KIKA HIMSELF

Star He
MAYBE THE ONE YOU REALLY HAVE THE HOTS FOR IS ACTUALLY LORD KIRA, NOT LADY KIRA
Aha! Here comes the slut!
W-WHAT ARE YOU SAYING?
I..I-?
OH, THEY'RE TALKING ABOUT SAISHOU-NO-CHUUJOU.
THUMP
THUMP
THUMP
THUMP
THUMP
IS THIS WHAT IS CALLED "THE QUEER KIND OF LOVE" THAT IS BECOMING POPULAR AT THE MOMENT?
H-HOW DARE YOU INSULT ME IN ATTENDANCE OF HIS MAJESTY!?
I'M REALLY GETTING ANGRY.
.....
AREN'T THERE A SAYING "TO TARGET THE GENERAL, FIRST AIM FOR THE HORSE"? THOUGH IT SEEMS THAT YOUR TARGET IS THE HORSE ALL ALONG.
WHEREVER THERE'S SAISHOUNO-CHUUJOU, THERE'S KIRA-CHUUJOU....

I'M SORRY IF I UPSET YOU
I JUST ADORE KIKA BECAUSE HE LOOKS LIKE THE LADY OF KITASAGA, THAT'S ALL
IT... IT CAN'T BE...
Frantic
I'm not gay
THE QUEER KIND OF LOVE...
BUT THAT WASN'T MEANT AS AN INSULT
...
WHAT THE DEVIL AM I THINKING...?
WHAT WILL BECOME OF US WHEN LORD KIRA'S MARRIAGE IS ANNOUNCED? WON'T WE BE EVEN MORE DISTURBED?
THE MERE FACT THAT HE ISN'T HERE TODAY CAN AROUSE THIS MUCH DISCORD AMONG US,

NO, YOUR MAJESTY...
I GUESS THE AUSPICIOUS DATE ISN'T FIXED YET
WOULD LIKE TO KEEP THE PACE GOING
BUT UDAIJIN
I'M AFRAID UDAIJIN'S ELDEST DAUGHTER, QUEEN CONSORT KOIDEN
BROUGHT ALONG THE NEWS ABOUT LORD KIRA WHEN SHE PAYS VISITS TO HER FAMILY
THE 3RD LADY SEEMS TO BE DAZZLED BY LORD KIRA'S VALIANCE
.....
KIRA IS GETTING MARRIED!?

HE'S AT THE PROPER AGE THERE'S NOTHING WRONG ABOUT
HOW COULD HE NOT CONFIDE IN ME WITH SUCH AN IMPORTANT MATTER...?
THEN WHY IS KIKA BEING TIGHT-LIPPED ON THIS?
THE WORDS FROM GONNO-CHUUJOU, UDAIJIN'S 2ND SON IN LAW, CAN'T BE ALL GROUNDLESS
UDAIJIN'S WISH MUST HAVE REACHED SADAIJIN'S HOUSEHOLD BY NOW
AM I SO UNIMPORTANT TO KIKA!?
THIS FEELING...
.....

WITHOUT A SLIGHTEST HINT OF SOMEONE SOON TO BE MARRIED.
I JUST HATE TO THINK HOW KIRA CAN ACT SO LAID-BACK
...CAN'T BE 'THE QUEER KIND OF LOVE', RIGHT?
EVERY TIME I HAVE MY PERIOD, I NEED TO FIND AN EXCUSE TO TAKE LEAVE. SICK LEAVE, MONOIMI LEAVE, WHATEVER
WHAT A BORE
OH MY HASN'T IT BEEN A WHILE...?
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SADAI-BEN*
Eeeeee
HE SHOULD HAVE SOME-THING FUN TO FILL ME IN
SAISHOUNO-CHUUJOU MUST BE HERE TODAY
Pat
MY SPRING HAS FINALLY COME FOR YOU, LORD KIRA
YOU AL-WAYS LOOK SO YOUNG, IT NEVER CROSSED MY MIND
GO FOR IT, LAD!
HA HA HA
?
Pat pat pat
THIS IS GOING TO BE FUN. I CAN'T WAIT...
NOW LORD KIRA CAN JOIN US WITH THOSE JOKES
COOL!
?
GENNO-SHOUSHO-UU
AND EV-ERYONE...
Sob sob snuffle
Giggle Kya
Giggle giggle
WHAT THE HELL ARE THEY GOS-SIPING ABOUT, DAM-NIT!?

(T/N - *SADAIBEN = MAJOR CONTROLLER OF THE LEFT, SUPERVISING FOUR MINISTRIES- CENTER, CIVIL SERVICES, CEREMONIES, AND TAXATION.)

OH,
SAISHOU NO CHUUJOU
I WANT TO ASK YOU SOME-THING
HOW DELIGHT-FUL TO SEE YOU
FWIP
CHUU-JOU...!?
THIS IS WHY I HATE MEN THESE DAYS!!
IF YOU HAVE SOMETHING TO SAY, SAY IT!
SAY IT DIRECTLY TO MY FACE, DAMNIT!!
So annoying all of you!

BUT IT'S BEEN DAYS, HE DIDN'T EVEN UTTER A WORD WHY...?
BEFORE, ONCE I'M BACK IN THE COURT, HIS MAJESTY WILL INSTANTLY ASK FOR ME
AND...
WHAT DID I EVER DO TO ANYONE!?
SO YOU'RE USING THIS AS AN EXCUSE TO TAKE A LONGER LEAVE CLAIMING ANOTHER MONO-IMI?
THE COURTIERS' DISGUSTING HABIT HAS RUBBED ON KIRA-SAMA, I SEE
Sayuri
BANG KIRA !!
THUD THUD THUD
EVEN SAISHOUNO-CHUUJOU WON'T TELL ME WHAT IT IS
YOU TRY BEING THE SUBJECT OF A GOSSIP WITHOUT A CLUE!
HEY, SAYURI

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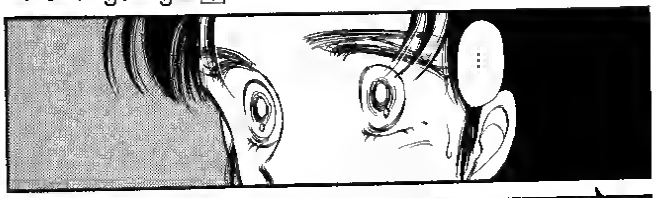
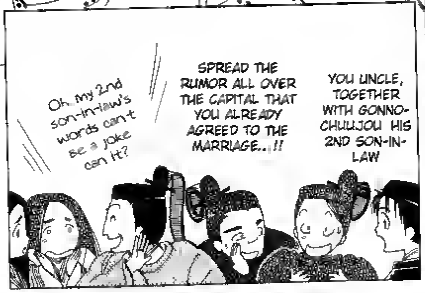
Gasp
S-S-SOMETHING BAD HAS HAPPENED!!
FATHER... COULD IT BE...
IT MUST BE WHAT THE GOSSIP IS ALL ABOUT!!
WHAT SHALL WE DO, FATHER!?
IT'S ABOUT THE MARRIAGE!!
YOU'RE BARKING AT THE WRONG TREE!
HUH?
WHOSE MARRIAGE?
YOURS.
WITH WHOM?
UDAIJIN'S 3RD DAUGHTER.
THAT THE SECRET ABOUT MY TRUE GENDER WAS EXPOSED...!?



THAT BASTARD UDAIJIN, YOUR UNCLE!
HE'S BEEN EYEING YOU FOR HIS 3RD DAUGHTER SINCE GENPUKU.
THAT TIME I DIDN'T GIVE IT A SERIOUS THOUGHT FOR I KNOW IT'S IMPOSSIBLE...
THIS TIME HE CAME UP WITH A VICIOUS SCHEME


Oh, my 2nd son-in-law's words can't be a joke can it?
SPREAD THE RUMOR ALL OVER THE CAPITAL THAT YOU ALREADY AGREED TO THE MARRIAGE..!!
YOU UNCLE, TOGETHER WITH GONNO-CHUUJOU HIS 2ND SON-IN-LAW

WHAT?!

HUH !?
THE EMPEROR
THE EMPEROR KNOWS ABOUT THIS TOO, FATHER!?
HE SURE DOES
WHEN I HEARD THE NEWS, I ALMOST HAD A HEART-ATTACK IN FRONT OF THE EMPEROR
ONLY HAVE AN AUDIENCE WITH HIS MAJESTY EVERY NOW AND THEN SO IT TURNED OUT THAT I WAS THE ONLY ONE KEPT OUT OF THE LOOP
ACK!!
I HEARD THE NEWS FROM HIS MAJESTY'S MOUTH HIMSELF
WITH HIS RANK AND FAMILY STATUS
I DON'T SEE WHY KIRA WOULD KEEP HIS MARRIAGE A SECRET
BESIDES, THE BRIDE-TO-BE IS UDAIJIN'S DAUGHTER, SO I HEARD

OUUU
IF ONLY I HAD KNOWN, I WOULDN'T HAVE ALLOWED YOU TO ENTER THE COURT!!
WHAT EXACTLY IS MY MARRIAGE ALL ABOUT?
HIS WORDS SURE CARPED WITH TAUNT AND SARCASM
Look at Sonnor Chuu you for ex ample, didn't his career make a huge leap forward after marrying Udaijin's 2nd daughter?
HIS MAJESTY SPOKE OF THIS HIMSELF..?
A MONK
A MONK!
ALL RIGHT? BECOME A MONK?
YEAH! I MADE A WRONG MOVE APPROVING YOUR GENPUKU
MONK!?
BECOME A MONK!
NO! IT'S NOT TOO LATE!
THUD
SOMEONE HELP!!
S-SADAIJIN -SAMA!
KE KE KE KE KE KE KE

FATHER, YOU GOTTA BE JOKING!!
WHO'S GOING TO BE A MONK NOW!?
AARGHH
OWW
WAHHH
rustle
IT'S GONNA BE ALL RIGHT FATHER.
TOMORROW MORNING I'LL GO TO THE COURT AND FIND THE ROOT OF THE PROBLEM.
AFTER THAT WE SHALL DISCUSS HOW TO GET OUT OF THIS MESS
ALL RIGHT!?
nod
now
sob
Ouuu
Ohhh
CURSE IT! ALL OF THIS WAS BECAUSE OF THAT IDIOT UDAIJIN

COME ON DANDY BOY
O-OH? COULD IT BE A GROUNDLESS RUMOR? MAYBE YOU DID FROM-ISE SOMETHING WITH MY DEAR 3RD DAUGHTER IN PRIVATE?
NO WONDER HE'S BEEN CREEPILY FAWNING ON ME LIKE THAT
SPREADING FALSE RUMORS WHILE I WAS AWAY
UNTIL THEY REACHED HIS MAJESTY'S EARS.
UNFORGIVABLE!!
There-fore,

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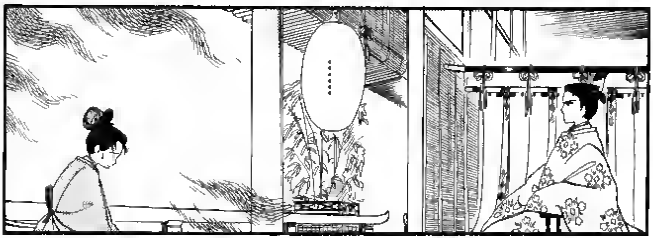
COURT LADIES ALL WHINED
THE LENGTHY ABSENT OF KIRA'S NAME ON HANACHIGAMI* IS TRULY LONE-SOME
MY MONO-IMI THIS TIME TOOK A WHILE, YOUR MAJESTY.

Kira-no-Chuujou hastened to the court on the next day.



CT/N: *HANACHIGAMI = THE LISTS COURTIER'S ATTENDANCE'S BOOK.)

WHAT'S THE MATTER, KIRA? YOU LOOK ODDLY FLUSTERED!
!
FIDGET
FIDGET
HE MUST REALLY BELIEVE THAT RUMOR IS TRUE...!!
OH DEAR
AS IF TO COMPENSATE FOR HIS LONG ABSENCE
HE WOULD COME BACK EVEN MORE CHEERFUL AND REFRESHING
BEFORE, WHENEVER KIRA TOOK A LONG LEAVE,
EH!?
BUSY CRAMMING POEMS FOR YOUR LADY LOVE PERHAPS?
SEEMED UNUSUALLY TIRING.
YOUR MONO-IMI...
BOTHER!

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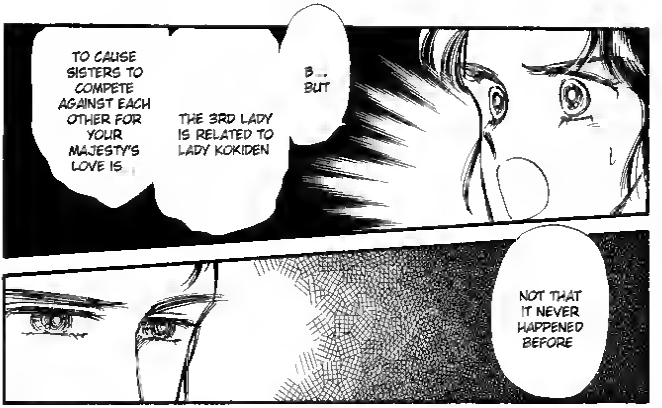
THE RUMOR ABOUT HIS MARRIAGE MUST BE TRUE!
HE LOOKS MORE NERVOUS!
WHAT DO I DO? HE TOTALLY BOUGHT THAT RUMOR CRAP!!
N-
N-
N-
Not at all, your
OH NO
AND I DIDN'T WANT TO BELIEVE UNTIL I HEAR IT FROM KIRA'S MOUTH HIMSELF.
CONSIDERING RECEIVING THE 3RD LADY, UDAIJIN'S DAUGHTER AS MY CONSORT.
I'VE BEEN...
ACTUALLY.
KIRACHUUJOU

RECEIVING THE 3RD LADY AS A ROYAL CONSORT!?
EHHH--!?
I'VE BEEN BEARING THIS WISH IN MY HEART FOR QUITE SOME TIME
AND NEVER BEFORE CONFIDED TO ANYONE
IN OTHER WORDS, TOTALLY MY PRIVATE THOUGHT
A- AND YOU MENTIONED IT ALL OF THE SUDDEN BECAUSE...?
P- PLEASE FORGIVE ME, YOUR MAJESTY
BUT WITH QUEEN CONSORT REKEDEN, QUEEN CONSORT KOKIEN, AND QUEEN CONSORT UMETSUBO,
THAT ALREADY MADE UP FOR THREE NOT TO MENTION, THEY'RE ALL AT EACH OTHER THROATS TO BE YOUR FAVORITE WHY WOULD YOUR MAJESTY...
SO WHAT IF I JUST WANT TO ADD THE FOURTH ONE?
!


TO CAUSE SISTERS TO COMPETE AGAINST EACH OTHER FOR YOUR MAJESTY'S LOVE IS...
THE 3RD LADY IS RELATED TO LADY KOKIDEN
B... BUT
NOT THAT IT NEVER HAPPENED BEFORE

CHE! YOU'RE JUST A SEX-CRAZED WOMANIZER AFTER ALL!!
YOU JUST WANT TO HAVE BOTH SISTERS ON YOUR LEFT AND RIGHT, HUH!?
WHAT WAS THOSE NOBLE PREACHING IN KITASAGA!
THEN WHY THE HELL YOU...
AND BEING LADY KOKIDEN'S SISTER MEANING HER LOOKS MUST BE NOTHING BUT AVERAGE
THE 3RD LADY HAS NEVER GAINED A REFUTATION AS A BEAUTY
SHAKE SHAKE
Irritated
YOU PERVERT!!
What the hell!

HUH?
...YOU SEE...
I AM BUT LACK OF AN HEIR
...!
HE SEEMS TO CARE FOR THE 3RD LADY A GREAT DEAL...
RIGHT NOW I APPOINTED NAGANO-MIYA, MY SISTER, AS THE 2ND-IN-LINE
BUT MOST PEOPLE DON'T APPROVE OF THIS UNCONVENTIONAL CHOICE...
BESIDES, THE PRINCESS HERSELF HAS ZERO INTEREST IN POLITICS
I MUST TRY MY BEST TO PRODUCE A SON...
...!
AND THAT'S ENOUGH REASON TO TAKE IN THE 3RD LADY!?
IT'S TRUE THAT NONE OF THE QUEEN CONSORTS BORE A LIVABLE SON SO FAR
BUT THIS IS TOO MUCH...!!
WHAT IF THE 3RD LADY CAN'T GIVE YOU AN HEIR!?
IF YOU LOVE HER, THAT'S ANOTHER STORY. BUT THIS IS AS IF CALLING WOMEN A BABY-MAKING MACHINE!

THE WEDDING BETWEEN THE 3RD LADY AND ME HAS BEEN DISCUSSED FOR A LONG TIME.
AND WE REGULARLY EXCHANGE POEMS...!
YOUR MAJESTY...!!
I'M TRULY DISAPPOINTED.
KIRA, DO YOU...
HONESTLY, SINCERELY WISH TO MARRY THE 3RD LADY?
YES.
...

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HOWEVER,
I DO NOT WISH TO EXERT MY POWER TO STEAL SUBORDINATES' LOVERS.
SO I'LL STOP HERE
WE'LL TALK ABOUT THIS NO FURTHER, KIRA.
YES, YOUR MAJESTY.
AS I SAID, I'D NEVER MENTIONED MY THOUGHT TO ANYONE...
NOT EVEN TO UDAIJIN
YOU CAN IMAGINE HOW RESTLESS I WAS WHEN I HEARD THE RUMOR.
GOTCHA ...!!

WHAT'S CERTAIN IS...
BUT YOU'LL NEVER FIND PEACE
BEING A WIFE OF THAT WOMANIZING EMPEROR!
I SUCCESSFULLY STOPPED HIM FROM TAKING A NEW CONSORT
IT MIGHT BE...
THE 3RD LADY'S CHANCE TO BECOME A QUEEN CONSORT
And the 3rd Lady probably won't thank me for it
I'VE BECOME HIS LOVE ENEMY
HE WON'T BE ASKING TO SEE ME FOR A VERY LONG LONG TIME
I FEEL ODDLY...
KIKA IS
THAT HUNG UP ON TO THE 3RD LADY...
DEFRESSED...

AND SINCE KIRA HAS NEVER BEEN AMBITIOUS...
WELL... A HUMBLE COURTIER IS A RARE GEM AT THIS HOUR
BUT
WELCOMING THE 3RD LADY TO THE COURT
THOSE EYES
WAS JUST MY LAME EXCUSE
TO KEEP KIRA FROM GETTING MARRIED
I AND KIRA MAY NOT BE ABLE TO HAVE AN INTIMATE CHIT-CHAT LIKE THIS EVER AGAIN..
IF THAT HAPPENS
IF KIRA HATES ME...
IT'D MAKE ME MOST WRETCHED...
OR RESORT TO MONKHOOD!!
I know he'd do it.
UPON HEARING KIRA'S MARRIAGE NEWS,
WHEN HE WAS BACK TO THE COURT, I ACTED LIKE HE DIDN'T EXIST, BUT HE DIDN'T SEEM TO CARE
KIRA MAY NOT ATTEND THE COURT FOR HALF A YEAR... NO HE MIGHT BE SO UPSET HE COMPLETELY QUIT
IF I FORCED THE 3RD LADY TO BECOME MY LADY CONSORT,

FOR SOMEONE TAKING HIS RESPONSIBLE SERIOUSLY,
KIRA WON'T DROP HIS DUTY JUST BECAUSE HE'S MARRIED
ALL I WANTED WAS TO HOLD ME BACK HERE WITH ME...
DOES THAT COUNT AS "THE QUEEK KIND OF LOVE"?
Sanjou Mansion
LOOKS LIKE I HAVE TO MARRY THE 3RD LADY AFTER ALL.

THUD
KIRA!
KI-
KI-
KI-
KI-
KI-
KI-
FATHER!?
W-WHYYY...!?
WHAT THE HELL DID YOU DO TO MAKE THINGS END UP THIS WAY?
WHAT!?
HUH?
TELL ME!!
straight face
IT WAS AN ACCIDENT

ARGH!!
WHAT NONE-SENSE!
I'LL GO TO THE COURT AND SOUND THE TRUTH OUT MYSELF.
A WEDDING OF THE CENTURY.
HOW ENVIOUS, LIDAIJIN
THE COURT LADIES HAVE BEEN WEEPING NON-STOP
KIRA-SAN IS A SINCERE GUY, UNLIKE SAISHOUNO-CHUUJOU
I'M GREATLY PLEASED TO GAIN SUCH FINE ♡ SON-IN-LAW FROM YOU, ANIUE
I GUESS I HAVE GONNO-CHUUJOU
MY 2ND SON-IN-LAW TO THANK FOR.
Oh father Ha ha ha
I COULD JUST KILL MY EVIL BROTHER!
SHOCKED
THE SOONER THE BETTER.
WHY DON'T YOU JUST MARK THE DAY ALREADY?
ALL THESE FUSS IS GIVING ME A HEADACHE
THERE'S NO WAY TO SAY IT'S BOGUS NOW.
JUDGING FROM THE WAY THINGS ARE GOING.
N- N-
NO...

BECOME A MONK!
PLEASE? KIRA?
YOU KEEP SHOVING ME INTO THE TEMPLE...!
DON'T BE RIDICULOUS
ALL I HAVE TO DO IS MARRY THE 3RD LADY!
M-MARRY?
MARRIAGE IS NOTHING LIKE GENPUKU AND BEING A COURTIER, DON'T YOU KNOW!!?
WHAT ABOUT BABIES? WHAT'RE YOU GONNA DO!? HOW COULD SHE HAVE A BABY WITH YOU!!?
BABY
WELL
WE'RE BOTH WOMEN. I GUESS THAT'S OUT OF THE QUESTION
HOW TO MAKE BABIES AND SUCH.
OH.. SAYING THAT... YOU KNOW WHAT A COUPLE DOES AT NIGHT?
IT'S EMBARRASSING
THEY SLEEP TOGETHER, RIGHT?
S-SLEEP TOGETHER!?
YOU REALLY KNOW!!?
OH!
ALL RIGHT!
YOU HAVE FULL KNOWLEDGE AND STILL WANT TO CHOOSE THIS PATH
THEN ON YOUR HEAD BE IT!
IF YOU'RE MARRIED,

AND GET CAUGHT AS A WOMAN. NOT ONLY WILL YOU BE DEAD OR EXILED .
UDAIJIN WILL BE HUMILIATED FOR MARRYING HIS DAUGHTER TO A GIRL
THIS DON'T YOU
EVER FORGET THIS!!
...
I'M AWARE OF THOSE WHAT-IFS
BUT IT CAN'T BE HELPED THINGS HAVE GOTTEN OUT OF HAND
I'M BEGINNING TO WORRY
I HOPE I WON'T HAVE TO MARRY A GUY
AHA HA HA
OH, NOW THAT YOU MENTIONED IT
HOW COULD YOU LAUGH IN THIS SITUATION!
YOU THINK YOU CAN KEEP YOUR SECRET FROM THE 3RD LADY?

SAISHOU-NO-CHUUJOU, MY PLAY-BOY PAL, TOLD ME
DON'T SWEAT IT.
UNLIKE THE LADIES HER AGE THE 3RD LADY IS INCREDIBLY CHILDISH AT 15
B-BUT
THE THING
YOU HAVE TO DO AFTER MARRIAGE
THE LOVERS' "THING"... YOU KNOW...
COME ON!
YOU AREN'T GOING TO LECTURE ME ON HOW TO MAKE BABIES TOO, ARE YOU!?
TOO...?
I JUST GOT INTERROGATED BY FATHER.
THIS IS NOT SOMETHING TO BE DISCUSSED WITH A FAMILY MEMBER.
WHAT?
YOU KNOW THAT AND STILL HAVE THE GUTS TO MARRY HER!?
You sure you've seriously thought about it?
ALL RIGHT...

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I FEEL GUILTY TO WRONG THE 3RD LADY SO I PROMISE I'LL BE VERY ATTENTIVE TO HER TO MAKE UP FOR THE FACT THAT I CAN'T GIVE HER
YES!
WELL
EVERYONE KNOWS THAT AFTER A COUPLE ARE MARRIED AND SLEEP ON THE SAME BED,
BABIES WILL EVENTUALLY PICK A TIME TO COME TO THEM.
IT'S THE GODS OF IZUMO' JOB
TO ARRANGE WHEN TO GIVE EACH COUPLE A BABY
that must be it
Therefore,
Lord Kira, who terribly misunderstood
that everyone shared her knowledge about that ,
entered an impeccably beautiful wedding ceremony.

WingtipCafe.com

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CREDITS

Manga The Change! (The changelings)
Story : HIMURO Saeko
Illust : YAMAUCHI Naomi

Raw provider Michex raw manga
Translated by Chihaya
Proof-read by Daffyd ap Morgen
Edited by Dlori

This manga is to be read
from Right to Left

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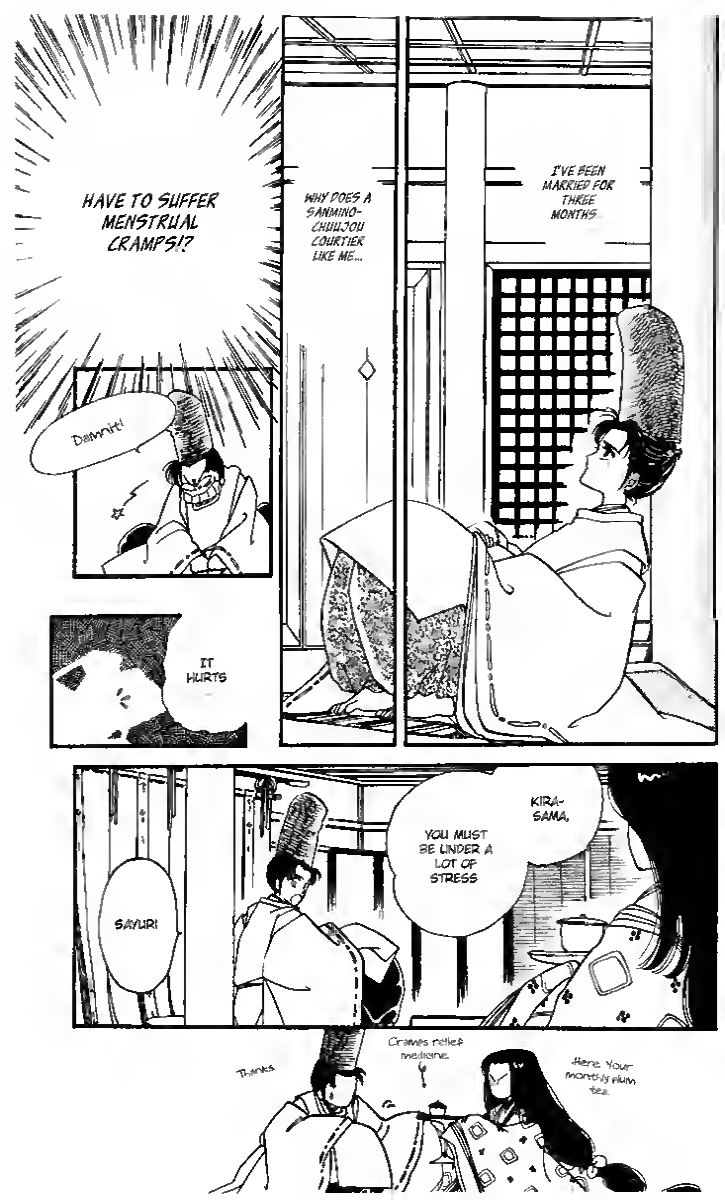
Proof-read by: Lunefin
Edited by: Merfeng
QC by: Elvisrules

But the young Lord Kira was excruciatingly exhausted by the constant guarding of her secret
UDAIJIN'S MANOR.
the marriage was of course in name only.
However since the Courtier Kira was in fact a woman,
The naive 3rd lady was easy enough to deceive
AH, KIRA-SAMA

ARE YOU GOING TO PAY A VISIT TO YOUR FATHER'S MANOR?
HOW SOON WILL YOU BE BACK?
LADY
IN FACT...
I PLAN TO SPEND THE NIGHT AT MY FATHER'S THE SADAIJIN'S
I HAVE TO GO BACK HOME FROM TIME TO TIME...
I WORRY ABOUT MY FRAIL YOUNGER BRO-ERR.. SISTER.
tears up
OH...

drip
drip
MINO...
SHOWED ME... VERY BEAUTIFUL PAINTING.
OF THE LAND-SCAPE OF HASEMOU.
I THOUGHT KIRA-SAMA AND I COULD GO THERE TOGETHER AND ADMIRE THE SCENERY
L-LADY!
I'M SORRY. PLEASE DON'T CRY!!
sob sob
ONCE I HAVE PERMIS-SION,
I'LL DEFINITELY TAKE YOU TO HASEMOU. HOW IS THAT?
Please, please, stop crying.
HIME-SAMA, PLEASE DON'T CRY. YOU'RE UPSETTING KIRA-SAMA.
THAT'S RIGHT.
EVERYONE IN THE CAPITAL KNOWS HOW DEVOTED KIRA-SAMA IS
PLEASE DON'T MAKE SUCH A SWEET LORD HUSBAND UN-COMFORTABLE.

COME BACK SOON, KIRA-SAMA
I'll be waiting.
.....
I UNDER-STAND
SADAIJIN'S SANJOU MANSION
AWGHHH...


I'VE BEEN MARRIED FOR THREE MONTHS
WHY DOES A SANMINO-CHUIJOU COURTIER LIKE ME...
HAVE TO SUFFER MENSTRUAL CRAMPS!?
Damnit!
IT HURTS
KIRA-SAMA,
YOU MUST BE UNDER A LOT OF STRESS
SAYURI
Cramps relief medicine.
Here. Your monthly elum tea.
Thanks

YEAH
SAYURI'S RIGHT
Your pain is mostly psychological
BEFORE YOU GOT MARRIED IT WAS NEVER THIS SERIOUS
IT'S PROBABLY DUE TO YOU CONSTANTLY BEING ON YOUR GUARD LIVING AT UDAIJIN-SAMA'S MANSION*
* Traditionally in those days the groom moved into the bride's house after marriage.
BUT NOW I HAVE TO WATCH MYSELF ALL THE TIME
BEFORE THE MARRIAGE I JUST HAD TO WATCH MYSELF WHILE I WAS IN THE PALACE
AFTER MY PERIOD STARTED, I DROPPED EVERYTHING AND SCURRIED BACK HOME...AFRAID THEY WOULD FIND OUT I WAS A WOMAN...
EVERYDAY IS SO STRESSFULL
STARE
AND WITH THOSE NOSY MAIDS STALKING MY EVERY STEP, HOW CAN I RELAX OR GET ANY REST?!
I DOZED OFF FOR A MINUTE AND THEY WERE ELBOWING EACH OTHER FOR THE CHANCE TO PUT A BLANKET AROUND ME...
No Let me
Let me do it
Blanket

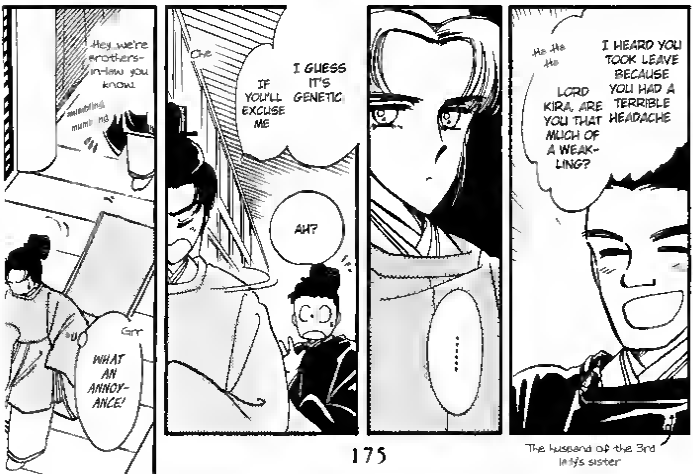
SAISHOUNO CHUUJOU WAS RIGHT SHE'S STILL A CHILD.
Kira-sama where're you going?
Playing with dolls
SHE'S LIKE A LITTLE SISTER TO ME
BUT I'M FOND OF THE 3RD LADY.
YOU CAN'T HIDE HERE FOREVER.
BUT YOU KNOW
I KNOW
LOOKS LIKE SHE'S VERY DEVOTED TO HER HUSBAND.
Please come back soon, very very soon, my dearest Kira-sama.
From your loving wife.
Folded into a cute ornament
SHE WAS JUST REPLYING TO THE LETTER I SENT TELLING HER I COULDN'T GO BACK TODAY
OH, DIDN'T YOU JUST RECEIVE AN ADORABLE LETTER FROM HER?

I FEEL EVEN MORE GUILTY
THAT'S WHY
YES...
KIRA-SAMA
HOWEVER GOOD THE EXCUSE,
I CAN'T DENY THAT I'M DECEIVING HER.
THEREFORE,
I REALLY WISH I CAN.
AS A HUSBAND, I WANT TO MAKE HER AS HAPPY AS POSSIBLE
KIRA-SAMA...
EH?
HAVING "EVERYONE'S EYES" ON ME ALL THE TIME IS SO TIRESOME.
NO ONE AT UDAIJIN'S HOUSE WILL EVER SUSPECT THAT YOU'RE A WOMAN
AS LONG AS YOU ARE A LOVING COUPLE IN EVERYONE'S EYES.

WildStrCafe.com

SPACED OUT
THE TIGHT ROPE ACT OF MY MARRIAGE TOOK A LOT OUT OF ME
SO I OFTEN APPEARED BLANK AND DROWSY IN THE PALACE
I WAS SO TIRED.
I WOULD JUST BLURT MY THOUGHTS OUT LOUD
AND SOMETIMES
AWHHH!
SOMETIMES I WOULD YAWN
HAHH ...
SOMETIMES I WOULD SIGH,
UHH, WELL ...
I HAVEN'T HAD MUCH EXPERIENCE
Ha Ha Ha
SELF-CONTROL IS CRUCIAL DURING THESE FIRST MONTHS
IT'S GOING TO TAKE ITS TOLL WHEN YOU GET OLDER, LAD
DON'T THINK YOU CAN DO ANYTHING JUST BECAUSE YOU'RE YOUNG
?
?
YOU MUST BE BUSY EVERY NIGHT
BUT YOU SHOULDN'T OVERDO IT
?
ABSOLUTELY CLUELESS
.....
HO HO HO
JUST DON'T DO IT TOO OFTEN, THAT'S ALL
Oh, to be young again.

YES! AND THIS BLOODY STRESS IS RUINING BOTH MY HEALTH AND MY MIND!
WHY CAN'T THEY JUST SAY WHAT THEY MEAN!
THAT AMBIGUOUSLY VAGUE WAY OF TALKING IS SO FRUSTRATING!!
BANG!!
ESPECIALLY WHEN...
BECAUSE TALKING CANDIDLY ABOUT THAT WOULD BE EMBARRASSING, OF COURSE!
EVERYONE KEEPS TEASING ME ABOUT "THAT"!
The next day...
Please don't be angry
OH DEAR, SHE HAS IT BAD THIS TIME...
Well, I don't want to go back to the palace anymore.



The husband of the 3rd lady's sister

I WAS FORCED TO MARRY A GIRL BECAUSE OF THE FALSE RUMORS THAT FIE AND THE UP NJIN EVILLY CONSPIRED TO SPREAD
WITHOUT THEM I WOULDN'T BE THIS MISERABLE!
KIRA-SAN.
HIS MAJESTY...
HIS MAJESTY
HAS BEEN WAITING FOR YOU FOR A WHILE
WANTED TO DIE OF "THAT" AGAIN
THIS IS MY LARGEST SOURCE OF STRESS...
OH NO

平安事始
へーあんごはじめ

七

考証をするにあたり
平安時代のことを
いろいろと調べると
ますます　わからなく
なる。
千年も前のことだ
からムリもないけど。
学問としてやるには
あまいがすきほど
果の深い時代だね。
考古学者も　ずぼ
楽しかろー。

でも　わたし
つくづく平安時代に
生まれなくてよかった
と思うわ。
わりかしハード時代
だよ。毎日　遊んで
るよーに見えるかもしれ
ないけど。

んで
わたし漫画の中で
知らずに描いたモノ
がたくさんあるんだ。
けど
知ってて描いてるモノ
もたくさんあるの。
だから平安ファンの
方々　見逃してね♡

OH FOY
HERE IT COMES
PROBABLY BECAUSE YOU'VE LATELY BEEN ENGAGED
WITH VERY MANY THINGS
HAS THE 3RD LADY TENDED YOU WELL?
ACTUALLY
I RETURNED TO MY HOME TO REST, YOUR MAJESTY
I SEE
BECAUSE YOU'VE HAD TO STAY AT UDAIJIN'S MANOR SINCE AFTER YOUR MARRIAGE,
THE SADAIJIN YOUR FATHER, MUST BE LONELY
YOUR MAJESTY
WELL IT IS NORMAL I WOULDN'T WANT TO BE APART FROM MY WIFE DURING THE FIRST MONTHS OF MARRIAGE
.....
But shouldn't you sort your priorities soon?
YOUR MAJESTY
INSTEAD OF SPENDING TIME WITH HIS FRIENDS LIKE BEFORE
THE COURTIERS NOW GOSSIP ABOUT HOW LORD KIRA GOES STRAIGHT HOME AFTER COMPLETING HIS DUTIES

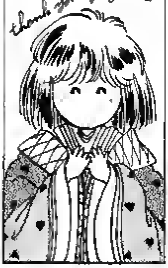
平田事始
ヘールルこにばじめ
ハ

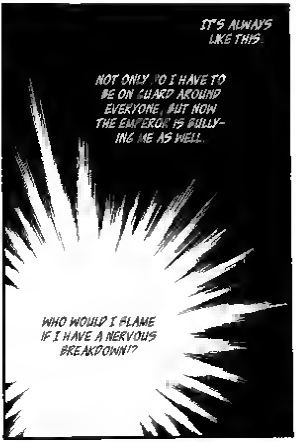
今回も「ざちぇル」
を 描くに あたって
御協力下さった 皆様
様に 心からの感
謝をこめて

ありがとね
♡

Thanks Special
Assistants
其の～其の四

Yuke Kasakura
Chieko Konnai
Makoto Tateno
Yuki Tamura
Etsuko Higano
Yuko Yamauchi
Nonko Yamaguchi




IT'S ALWAYS LIKE THIS.
NOT ONLY DO I HAVE TO BE ON GUARD AROUND EVERYONE, BUT NOW THE EMPEROR IS BULLYING ME AS WELL.
WHO WOULD I BLAME IF I HAVE A NERVOUS BREAKDOWN!?

ERR... LADY...
ERM, MY WIFE, SHE...
BEFORE, YOU SEEMED TO GREATLY ENJOY YOUR COURT DUTIES.
I SEE.
YOU RARELY TOOK LENGTHY LEAVES WHEN OTHERS WERE BUSY
N-NOT AT ALL!
YOUR MAJ-ESTY, I JUST...

*Koukyuu ... where the emperor and his consorts and concubines lived

WHILE WE'RE ON THIS TOPIC, I SUGGEST YOU TRY TO PAY ATTENTION TO YOUR DUTIES AS WELL
.....
IF I'D KNOWN I WOULD HAVE USED MY POWER TO CLAIM HER FOR THE KOUKYUU *
ENOUGH TO DISTRACT A DILIGENT COURTIER LIKE LORD KIRA...
SO THE UDAIJIN'S 3RD DAUGHTER IS THAT CHARM-ING THEN?
.....

WingtipCafe.com

THE PREVIOUS EMPEROR WOULDN'T HAVE OBJECTED TO THE OCCASIONAL SICK LEAVE!
I GUESS THAT'S MY PUNISHMENT FOR STEALING THE 3RD LADY FROM HIM
HOW
DID IT TURN OUT THIS WAY?
I didn't do something terrible right? Did I?
OH RIGHT
I SHOULD GET SOME FRESH AIR AT EMPRESS CONSORT REIKEIDEN'S
Turn
THE EMPRESS CONSORT, LADY REIKEIDEN

MEETING HER ALWAYS BRIGHTENS MY DAY
HAS BEEN WITH THE EMPEROR SINCE HE WAS BUT A CROWN PRINCE. SHE'S ALMOST 30 YEARS OLD NOW, AND HAS LONG SINCE STOPPED BATTLING FOR POSITION WITH THE OTHER CONSORTS
OH, IT'S KIRA.
HAVE YOU RECOVERED FROM YOUR HEADACHE?
I HAVE, MY LADY.
I CAN'T TELL HER IT'S MENSTRUAL CRAMPS
YOU KNOW, WE WERE JUST HAVING
AN INTERESTING CONVERSATION ABOUT THE RUMORS CIRCLING ROUND YOU.

SAISHOU NO-CHUU-JOU
IN OTHER WORDS, GOSSIPING ABOUT ME
Pout
Hh
NOT AT ALL
WE WERE JUST SAYING THAT HIS MAJESTY'S RECENT SULLEN-NESS
MUST STEM FROM KIRA'S ABSENCE
THAT'S RIGHT
HOW RIDICU-LOUS!!
IS THAT RIGHT?
BECAUSE BEFORE HE DISMISSED ME FROM THE MEET-ING, HE WAS BULLYING ME
THE EMPEROR WAS ONLY JEALOUS OF THE 3RD LADY
HIS MAJESTY MUST FEEL LONELY
LORD KIRA IS THE COURTIER HIS MAJESTY FEELS THE CLOSEST TO RIGHT NOW

OH WELL
I NEVER WIN WITH YOUR QUICK WIT.
Oh, my
YOU KNOW
YOU'VE JUST COMMITTED A SERIOUS OFFENSE TO THE GRACEFUL IMPERIAL CONSORT
SOME UNCOUTH IDIOT EVEN CALLED IT "THE QUEER LOVE."
AT FIRST...
I WAS QUITE ANGRY WHEN KIRA SUDDENLY DECIDED TO GET MARRIED WITHOUT TELLING ME
BUT KIRA IS STILL THE SAME AS EVER
GRIN
Sulk
AND I THOUGHT WE WERE BEST FRIENDS!!

CHUUJOU, HAVE YOU NOT GIVEN UP ON LADY KIRA?
OH RIGHT. KIRA
SINCE YOU WENT BACK TO STAY AT SADAIJIN'S, WHY DON'T YOU TELL ME ABOUT HOW LADY KIRA IS DOING?
EVEN SO KIRA STILL WON'T INTRODUCE ME TO MY LOVE...
LIKE HELL I WILL MY BROTHER IS A GUY!
OF COURSE NOT.
ACK!
SOMETIMES I CAN'T HELP BUT WONDER... WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IF I FOUND THE NERVE TO SNEAK INTO HER ROOM AND TAKE CARE OF THE MATTER FOR MYSELF...
THEY MAY CALL ME A PLAYBOY BUT THE ONLY LADY IN MY HEART
IS LADY KIRA.
CHUU...
CHUU-JOU!!
THEN HE'LL FIND OUT MY BROTHER IS A GUY!!

Sigh
AN ABSO-LUTE NO!!
THAT IS...
OR I'LL SEVER ALL TIES WITH YOU!! DO YOU UNDER-STAND!!?
BUT HOW COULD I TRUST
THE WORDS OF SUCH A PLAYBOY
Y-YEAH! I KNOW.
I WAS KIDDING YOU MORON!!
TRULY
.....
Not worth it.
BUT IT SEEMS THAT KIKA REALLY IS WILLING TO SEVER ALL OUR TIES...
IT WOULD BE SO EASY TO SNEAK IN AND MAKE LADY KIKA MINE
Done it countless times before
Fu Fu
HE REALLY IS UPSET

WindupCafe.com

HO HO HO
THE TWO OF YOU REALLY ARE BEST FRIENDS AFTER ALL
TAP TAP TAP
E-EXCUSE ME, MILADY
WHAT HAP-PENED ?
SUCH A COMMO-TION
BUT
LADY UMET-SUBO IS HERE TO SEE YOU
AHH!
HER ES-CORTS ARE AL-READY HERE..
HOW UNEX-PECTED..
WHAT A BOTHER.. GET SET UP QUICKLY..
BANG
TAD
RUSTLE

ANNOYED
MY MY WHAT WAS THAT COMMOTION ABOUT?
ARE YOU CLEANING OUT THE HOUSE, LADY REIKEIDEN?
WELCOME, UMETSUBO...
.....
HO HO HO HO
I THOUGHT I WOULD DROP BY TO JOIN THE CHAT
I DON'T LIKE LADY UMETSUBO AT ALL
HONESTLY...
SHE ACTS LIKE SHE'S A GREAT BEAUTY WHEN SHE'S NOT
SINCE
I HEARD THAT KIRA-SAMA AND CHUUJOU-SAMA WERE HERE
Glance...

COULD IT BE THAT THE PRESENCE OF
THE MOST GRACEFUL LADY OF THE COURT UNSETTLES YOU?
WE'RE NOT SHY WE JUST DON'T WANT TO GO
KIRA-SAMA, CHUU-JOUSA-MA,
PLEASE DON'T BE SHY YOU CAN STOP BY AT UMETSUBO MANSION ANYTIME
Really
HE'S SHOWN REALLY POOR TASTE
WHY HIS MAJESTY TOOK SUCH A VULGAR WOMAN AS HIS WIFE IS BEYOND ME
I SUPPOSE IT'S JUST COINCI-DENCE, THAT YOU ONLY HAVE WORK WHEN YOU ARE ABOUT TO PAY ME A VISIT"?
WHAT? THEN HOW DO YOU MANAGE TO VISIT LADY REIKEIDEN SO OFTEN?
I HAVE HAD MANY THINGS TO TAKE CARE OF
ONLY RECENTLY
Not at all
THAT ISN'T IT AT ALL, MY LADY
IMPE-RIAL CON-SORT UMET-SUBO
ERM. ERR.
T That's not what I meant
Growl

HE'S RIGHT...
Y, YES.
.....
RIGHT, KIRA?
SO HE'S BEEN DEALING WITH BOTH WORK AND HIS PERSONAL LIFE.
IT'S JUST THAT KIRA IS NOW ENJOYING THE LIFE OF A NEWLYWED
BECAUSE OF THAT, IT'D BE DIFFICULT FOR HIM TO COME HERE AS OFTEN AS HE'D LIKE TO.
SO THE RUMOR IS TRUE. HE REALLY IS THAT DEVOTED TO THE UDAIJIN'S 3RD DAUGHTER...?
AND I THOUGHT IT WAS JUST A POLITICAL MARRIAGE...
IS THE 3RD LADY
THAT CHARMING?
FROM WHAT I HEARD, SHE STILL LOVES TO PLAY WITH DOLLS
AND STILL ACTS LIKE A CHILD
YES.
BUT THAT'S WHAT MAKES HER CUTE.

WingtipCafe.com

ANY COURTIER WOULD FEEL GREATLY HONORED BY HAVING A CONVERSATION WITH ME.
BUT A MERE KIRA-CHUUJOU DARES TO THINK THAT NAIVE CHILD IS BETTER THAN ME!?
OH !
HER INNOCENT, AND DOLL-LIKE APPEARANCE MAKES ME WANT TO NURTURE AND PROTECT HER
FROM THE BOTTOM OF MY HEART
Agitated!
OH LADY KIRA?
YOU MEANT THAT ECCENTRIC GIRL WHO SHUTS HERSELF IN THE HOUSE
CHANTING MAGIC SPELLS?
PERHAPS LORD KIRA HAS GROWN SO ACCUSTOMED TO SEEING DAZZLING BEAUTIES LIKE HIS SISTER,
THAT HE NOW FINDS AN INNOCENT LADY MORE CAPTIVATING

BUT NO MATTER HOW MUCH THE RUMORS PRAISE HER BEAUTY,
WE ALL KNOW SHE'LL END UP AS A SPINSTER HOW PITIFUL!
LADY KIRA HERSELF IS JUST A SHY GIRL THAT'S ALL.
THE ONE WHO PRAYS IS LADY YUMENO OF THE EAST MANOR.
EXACTLY RIGHT, MILADY
I SEE A PERFECT EXAMPLE DIRECTLY IN FRONT OF ME
JUST BECAUSE HIS MAJESTY LOOKS ON HIM WITH A SMALL AMOUNT OF FAVOR..!
ONE SHOULDN'T ACT CONCEITEDLY ARROGANT
AT LEAST THAT'S BETTER
THAN A HYSTERICAL WIFE WHO'LL GO TO ANY LENGTHS TO GET HER HUSBAND'S ATTENTION,
WITHOUT ANY THOUGHT TO MORALS OR PROPRIETY
OH MY...!!

PLEASE EXCUSE ME!!
RUSTLE
BANG BANG BANG BANG BANG
KIRA! YOU'RE IN OVER YOUR HEAD.
NO MATTER WHAT, SHE'S STILL A POWERFUL IMPERIAL CONSORT.
TRUE ...!
AND SHE'S NOT SOMEONE WHO FORGIVES EASILY.
worry
NORMALLY YOU WOULDN'T REACT OR BE OFFENDED...
IT'S JUST, WHEN MY SISTER WAS MENTIONED
I COULDN'T HELP IT.
BESIDES,
WHEN I THINK THAT THE EMPEROR HOLDS SO MUCH AFFECTION FOR SUCH A VULGAR WOMAN I...
WHAT?
LIMET-SUBO?

I'M STILL BROWNING IN GUILT OVER LASHING OUT AT KIKA
PROBABLY THROWING A TANTRUM ABOUT SOMETHING SILLY AS USUAL
Such as a neighboring mansion's flowers blooming earlier or someone's kimono being prettier
YES, SIRE. MY LADY INSISTED THAT IT WAS AN URGENT MATTER...
EH?
KIRA!?
A LOYAL COURTIER WHO USED TO BE A TRUSTWORTHY SERVANT,
HAS TURNED INTO A LOVESICK FOOL...
IT'S LIKE HE DOESN'T EVEN NOTICE YOUR MAJESTY ANYMORE!
ONCE HE THINKS ABOUT THE 3RD LADY, HE BECOMES A LAZY IMBECILE...
IT'S TRUE!
IS THAT SO...
HE CONSTANTLY BOASTS ABOUT HOW LOVELY HIS WIFE IS, AND HOW HE WON'T BE VISITING THE KOUKYUU ANYMORE!
YES, YOUR MAJESTY!!

SPACED OUT
BUT NOWADAYS EVEN WHILE HAVING A ROYAL AUDIENCE, HE SIGHS AND SEEMS DISTRACTED
HE MUST HAVE BEEN THINKING OF HIS BELOVED WIFE
AND I WAS BLAMING MYSELF FOR UNFAIRLY ACCUSING HIM
BUT HE REALLY DID BECOME MORE DISTANT BECAUSE OF THE 3RD LADY!?
KIKA USED TO ENJOY HIS WORK IN THE COURT
AND HE EVEN SAID OUTRIGHT THAT HE WANTED TO NURTURE AND PROTECT THE 3RD LADY FROM THE BOTTOM OF HIS HEART. MY! HAS HE NO SHAME?
THAT MUST BE IT...
ISN'T THAT ENTIRELY UNCALLED FOR!!?
IT'S A DIRECT INSULT TO YOUR MAJESTY.
MOREOVER, HOW COULD HE PUT HIS LOYALTY FOR A MERE WOMAN BEFORE HIS OBLIGATIONS TO ME ERM TO YOUR MAJESTY
ARE YOU EVEN LISTENING TO ME?
YOUR MAJESTY!!
*Dazaifu: A governing office in Kyushu (island). Very far from Kyoto which is on Honshu Island.
YOUR MAJESTY, YOU SHOULD SEND HIM TO SOMEWHERE FAR AWAY, SUCH AS DAZAIFU OR SOMEPLACE SIMILAR.
HE'S UNFIT TO SERVE THE COURT IN THE CAPITAL.

..I AM LISTEN-ING
EEP
OH.. NO..
USUALLY HE DOESN'T LIS-TEN TO HALF THE THINGS I SAY, SO I JUST EXAG-GERATE..
URR.. UMM..
HOWEV ER,
ONE CAN'T HELP TAKING PITY ON SUCH A LOVING HEART. THUS, TO BANISH HIM FROM THE CAPITAL WOULD BE..
Y-YES
HE DID SAY HE WOULDN'T BE COMING TO THE KOUKYUU ANY-MORE, DIDN'T HE?
OR SOME-THING CLOSE TO THAT
IT'S NOT ENTIRELY A LIE
I SEE
Rise
I'LL CARE-FULLY CON-SIDER YOUR ADVICE
OH..
YOUR MAJE STY..

IF LORD KIRA REALLY IS BANISHED TO DAZAIFU
OH GOD, PLEASE LET HIM TAKE LORD KIRA'S PREVIOUS DEDICATION INTO ACCOUNT.
USUALLY HE'S BARELY AWARE OF WHAT I TALK ABOUT
IT NEVER OCCURRED TO ME THAT HE WOULD ACTUALLY TAKE ME SERIOUSLY
CRAP
What do I do?
ERM...
OH NO
WILL DEFINITELY RETALIATE AGAINST ME!!
Lord Kira's father-in-law
Kira's father
THE TWO MOST PROMINENT FIGURES OF THE COURT
THAT IDIOT KIRA...
HOW COULD HE...!

I'M GOING TO MAKE YOUR LIFE SO BUSY YOU WON'T HAVE TIME TO THINK OF THE 5RD LADY!!
YOU'RE READING LORD KIRA'S LETTER AGAIN?
YES. HE SAID HE WOULD RETURN TODAY
WE'LL GO TO ADMIRE THE PAINTING OF HAZEMOU TOGETHER.
OH, HIME-SAMA
I UNDERSTAND HIME-SAMA'S FEELING VERY, VERY WELL
TIME SPENT WAITING FOR ONE'S LOVE SEEMS TO STRETCH FOREVER.
I ALSO HAVE A PERSON LIKE THAT NOW
MY SPECIAL SOMEONE.
Kya! There, I said it
OH
WHAT'S HE LIKE?
HE CAN'T BE COMPARED TO HIME-SAMA'S SPECIAL SOMEONE,
BUT HE'S STRONG AND MUSCULAR.
A TRUE HUNK
...MUSCULAR?
Starry eyed
MINO

WHAT IS AN "A"?
BUT WHEN HE FORCEFULLY "A" ME, IT FELT SO GOOD IT MADE ME FALL FOR HIM EVEN MORE
KYA KYA
MIND YOUR TASTE IN MEN IS STRANGE.
IS IT? I'M SURPRISED MYSELF.
BUT MY KIKA-SAMA IS OF DELICATE BUILD. LIKE THE CHARACTERS IN A SCROLL OF FAIRY TALES
PUSH
?
KYAAAA, HIME-SAMA!! YOU'VE ALREADY DONE IT ALL FROM "A" TO "C". DON'T TEASE ME ANYMORE.
BUT I REALLY DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU MEAN.
OH PLEASE, IT'S JUST "A" FROM "ABC," AS YOU KNOW.
BUT I—
WHY DON'T YOU ASK LORD KIRA TONIGHT?
I'M SURE HE'LL BE MORE THAN HAPPY TO DEMON-STRATE
ALRIGHT I'LL SURELY ASK HIM
Obedient
EH?
WE'RE NOT GOING TO HAZE-MOU?

T/N: Iroha = The Japanese "ABC of love" (i-ro-ha = a poem used as an ordering of Japanese syllabary). A = kiss, B = foreplay/fondle, C = intercourse

LET'S PUT IT OFF FOR NEXT TIME.
I'M SORRY DEAR.
BUT I CAN'T TAKE ANY MORE ABSENCES FROM WORK
I'M SO SORRY
SO-RRY!
I'VE BEEN WAITING FOR TODAY.
KIRA-SAMA, YOU SAID YOU WOULD TAKE ME THERE
I WAS REALLY LOOKING FOR-WARD TO IT.
BE A GOOD GIRL, PLEASE DON'T CRY
Sob
AND IF I ASK KIRA-SAMA, KIRA-SAMA WILL SURELY DEMON-STRATE IT FOR ME.
OH MY GOD!
KYAA!
I CAN'T LISTEN TO THIS!
DEMON-STRATE?
"A" MAKES ONE FEELS GOOD.
BUT MINO SAID
"ABC"
ISN'T THAT HOW WE RECITE THE AL-PHABET?
"A"?
WHAT IS THE "A" OF "ABC"?
OH KIRA-SAMA

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Ahh Ahh Ahh
Yeah
IT'S JUST LIKE BEING AROUND THOSE IDIOTS IN THE PALACE!!
I'M SURROUNDED BY THIS AGAIN
Don't ever do it!
Squeal Squeal
LET'S PRACTICE TOGETHER UNTIL WE ARE BOTH SKILLED
I'LL TEACH YOU
OHHH
WELL ALRIGHT THEN...
WHAT THE HELL ARE THEY TEASING ME ABOUT? HOW FRUSTRATING!!
Could we please get over this?
Ask I'm getting a nose bleed
Kyaa!
Oh my God "practice together"
"Until we're skilled"
It had only been a short while since the marriage on false pretenses,
but already Lord Kira was in hell
Cried herself to sleep
At the palace he had the Consort Umetsubo who despised him and who filled the Emperor's ears with lies about him
At home he had the childish 3rd lady who was his responsibility and the mocking of the maids to deal with
In the end, Lord Kira was still left ignorant about the ABC of love.

end chapter 4 / end volume 1